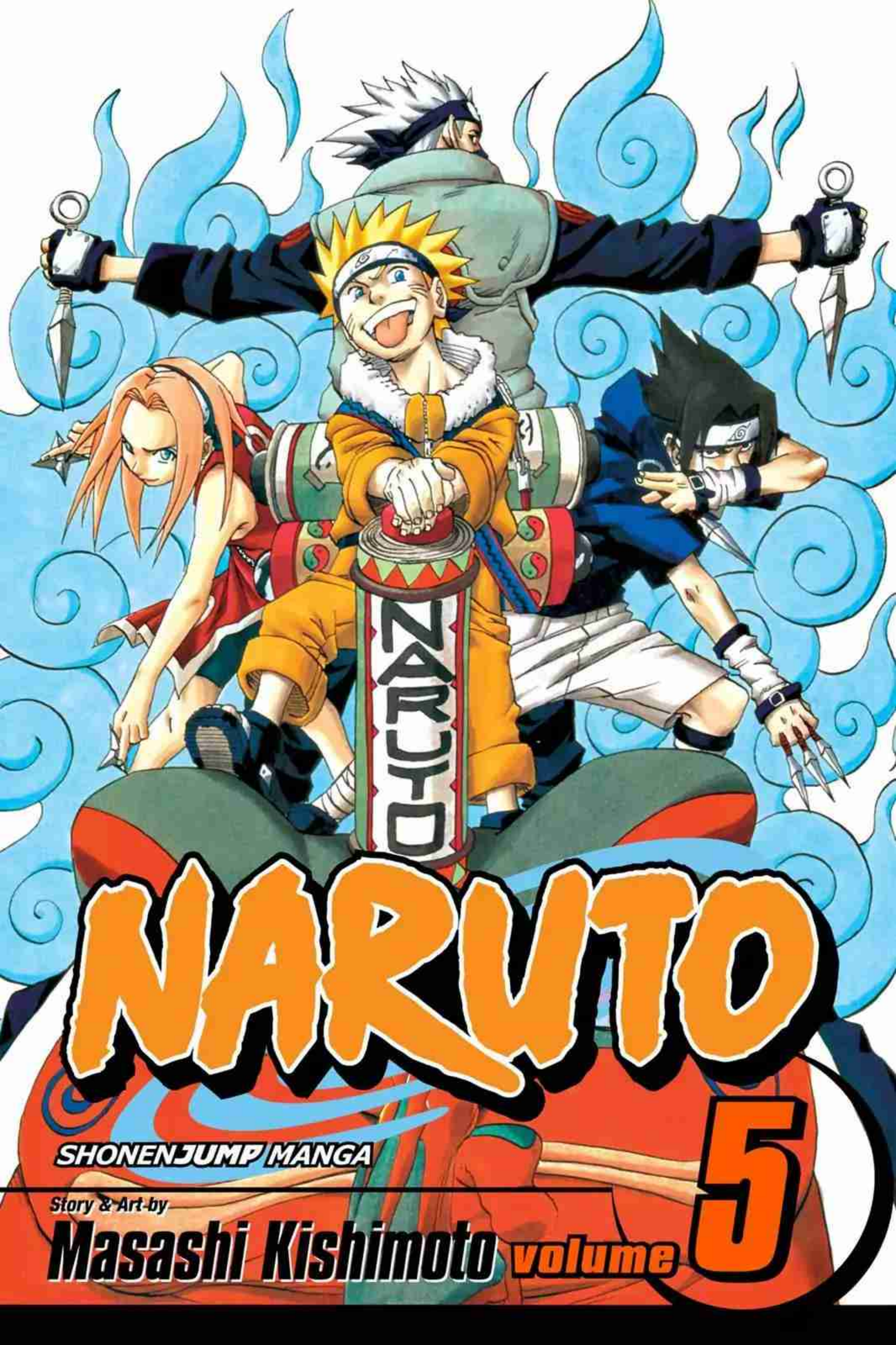
NARUTO
NARUTO
SHONEN JUMP MANGA
Story & Art by
Masashi Kishimoto
volume 5

岸本斉史

I love movies, so I go see them pretty often. And since I watch movies often, I decided to spend what little money I had to purchase a DVD player. Ho ho ho...now I can enjoy movies with incredibly high image quality and Dolby Digital sound! Or so I thought, except that the movies I wanted to watch hardly ever came out on DVD, so I couldn't watch them anyway.

Recently, however, the popularity of DVDs has finally risen, and more and more DVDs are coming out!! Yes! Except...now I'm so busy drawing manga that I don't have time to watch them, even though I want to! Waah!

—*Masashi Kishimoto, 2000*

Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** ("Mechanism"). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.

**NARUTO VOL. 5**
**The SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition**

This graphic novel contains material that was originally published in English in **SHONEN JUMP** #19-23.

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

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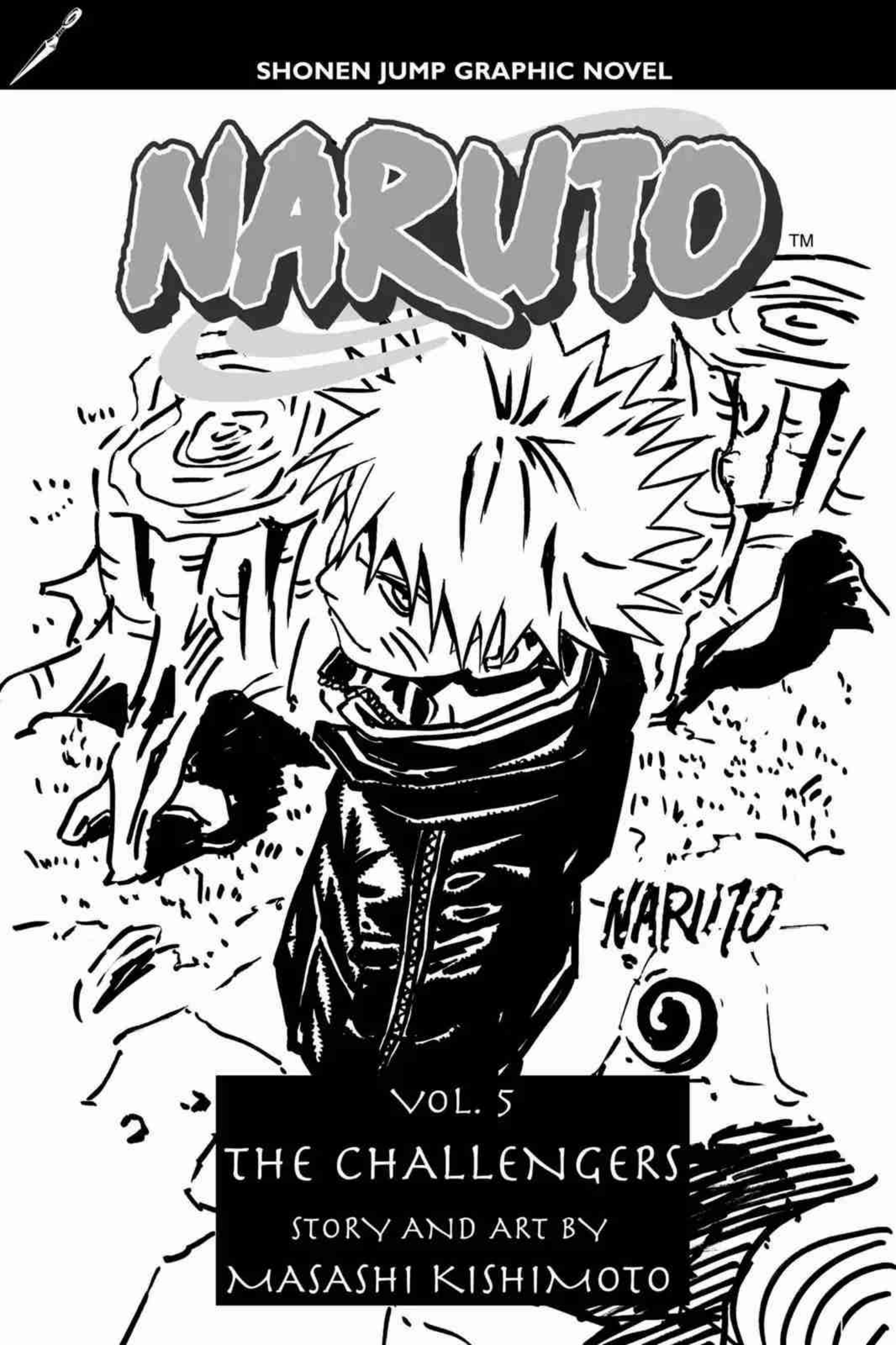
**PARENTAL ADVISORY**
NARUTO is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic & fantasy violence.

SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL

# NARUTO™




VOL. 5

## THE CHALLENGERS

STORY AND ART BY

MASASHI KISHIMOTO

## SAKURA サクラ

Smart and studious, Sakura is the brightest of Naruto's classmates, but she's constantly distracted by her crush on Sasuke. Her goal: to win Sasuke's heart!

## NARUTO ナルト

When Naruto was born, a destructive fox spirit was imprisoned inside his body. Spurned by the older villagers, he's grown into an attention-seeking troublemaker. His goal: to become the village's next *Hokage*.

## SASUKE サスケ

The top student in Naruto's class, Sasuke comes from the prestigious Uchiha clan. His goal: to get revenge on a mysterious person who wronged him in the past.

**KAKASHI** カカシ

The elite ninja assigned to train Naruto, Sasuke and Sakura. His *Sharingan* ("Mirror-Wheel Eye") allows him to reflect and mimic enemy *ninjutsu*.

**ROCK LEE** ロック・リー

One of the many student ninja from foreign villages who have traveled to Konohagakure for the Junior Ninja Selection Exams. What does this creepy kid have in mind when he challenges Sasuke to a duel? Sasuke is about to find out!

## THE STORY SO FAR...

Twelve years ago, a destructive nine-tailed fox spirit attacked the ninja village of Konohagakure. The *Hokage*, or village champion, defeated the fox by sealing its soul into the body of a baby boy. Now that boy, Uzumaki Naruto, has grown up to become a ninja-in-training, learning the art of *ninjutsu* with his classmates Sakura and Sasuke.

Naruto, Sasuke and Sakura have been nominated by their instructor Kakashi to take the Junior Ninja Selection Exams, which they must pass to advance to the next level of ninja training. The village is crawling with student ninja from villages near and far, who are all determined to ace the exams. On their way to turn in the applications, they observe their fellow students' advanced skill and training, and Naruto and his classmates begin to suspect that they're in way over their heads....

# NARUTO

## VOL. 5
## THE CHALLENGERS

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YES!

YOU WANT TO FIGHT ME... HERE AND NOW?
BUT THAT'S...

!!
TAK

TAP
FWUM

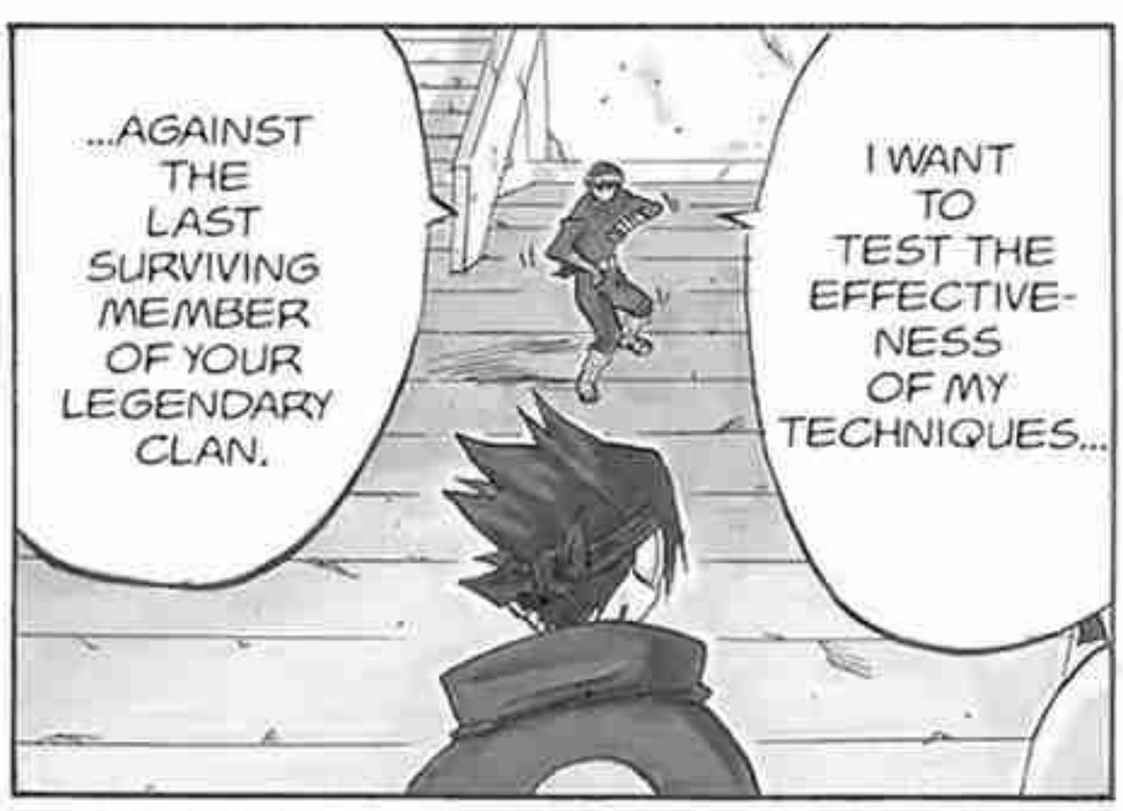
MAKE-OUT
PARADISE

# 37: A TOTAL MISMATCH!!!

AMONG STICKLERS, ETIQUETTE REQUIRES ONE TO INTRODUCE ONESELF BEFORE ASKING FOR THE NAME OF ANOTHER...

MY NAME IS ROCK LEE.

HUH... SO YOU KNEW WHO I WAS ALL ALONG.
...UCHIHA SASUKE.


...AGAINST THE LAST SURVIVING MEMBER OF YOUR LEGENDARY CLAN.
I WANT TO TEST THE EFFECTIVE-NESS OF MY TECHNIQUES...

BESIDES...
THROB

I'M CALLING YOU OUT!!
SHF

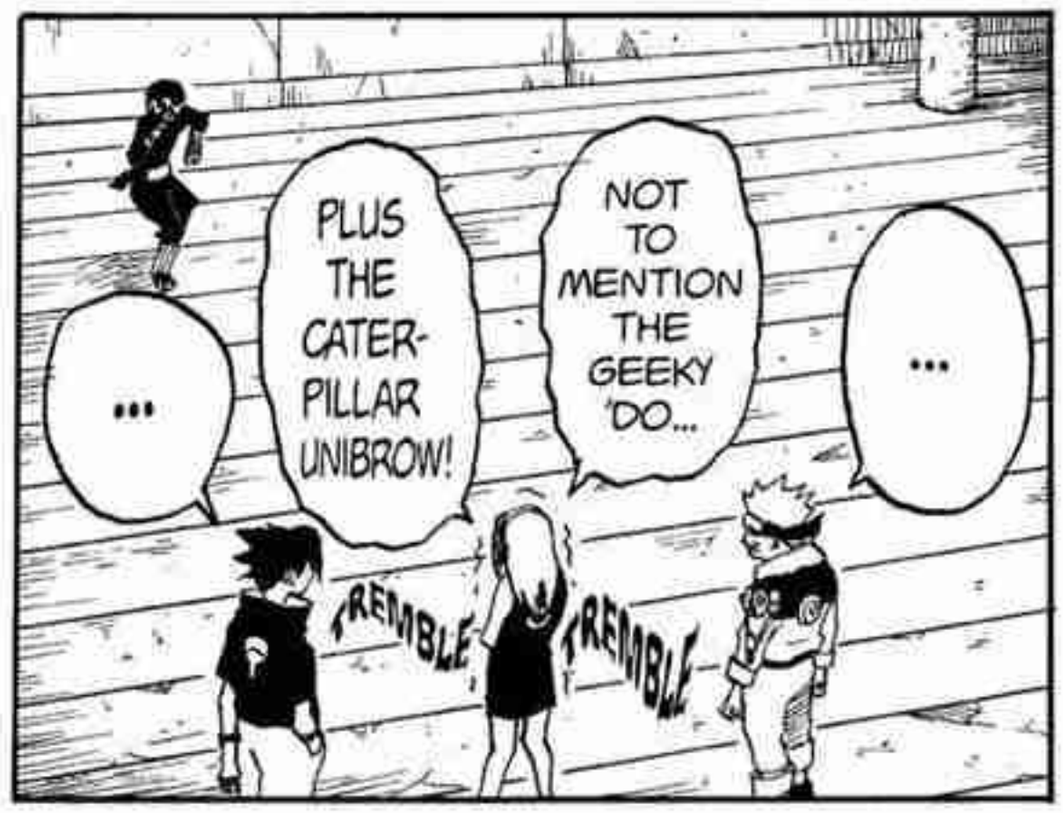
WINK

GLARE

!

THOSE EYELASHES CREEP ME OUT!
NO WAY!!

YOU'RE AN ANGEL!!
-MWAH-
SMOOCH


...
PLUS THE CATER-PILLAR UNIBROW!
NOT TO MENTION THE GEEKY 'DO...
...
TREMBLE
TREMBLE

THIP
WHEW! THAT WAS TOO CLOSE...
PUFF
THROB
PUFF
THROB

!!!
...
TIPF
THUD
AIEE!!

SASUKE, SASUKE! IT'S ALL ABOUT SASUKE! BLEAH!

YOU KEEP YOUR WEIRD KISSES TO YOURSELF, CREEP!

I COULD HAVE DIED, DODGING THAT!!

AW... DON'T BE LIKE THAT...

SO YOU'RE CHALLENGING ME, EVEN KNOWING MY LINEAGE?

IN OTHER WORDS, YOU'RE A FOOL.

OH, YEAH!

SO, DOG-BROW... DO YOU REALLY WANT TO LEARN...

...WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN UCHIHA?

ABSOLUTELY!

WOO

HOO!

I CAN HARDLY WAIT!

I'M GOING TOE-TO-TOE WITH THE CREAM OF THE ROOKIE CROP, FIRST TIME OUT!

NOW YOU'LL GET THE PROOF YOU REQUIRE, MASTER GUY!

HOLD IT.

JUST GIVE **ME** FIVE MINUTES...

LET ME HANDLE DOG-BROW. HE'LL BE TOAST.

ONLY UCHIHA.

I HAVE NO INTEREST IN FIGHTING YOU.

TAK TAK

SHHA

TAK

STORY OF MY FREAKIN' LIFE! IT'S "SASUKE, THIS!" AND "SASUKE, THAT!" TILL I COULD JUST **PUKE!**

FWIP
GURK!
THAM
!!
AAK
SHUUUU

AUGH!

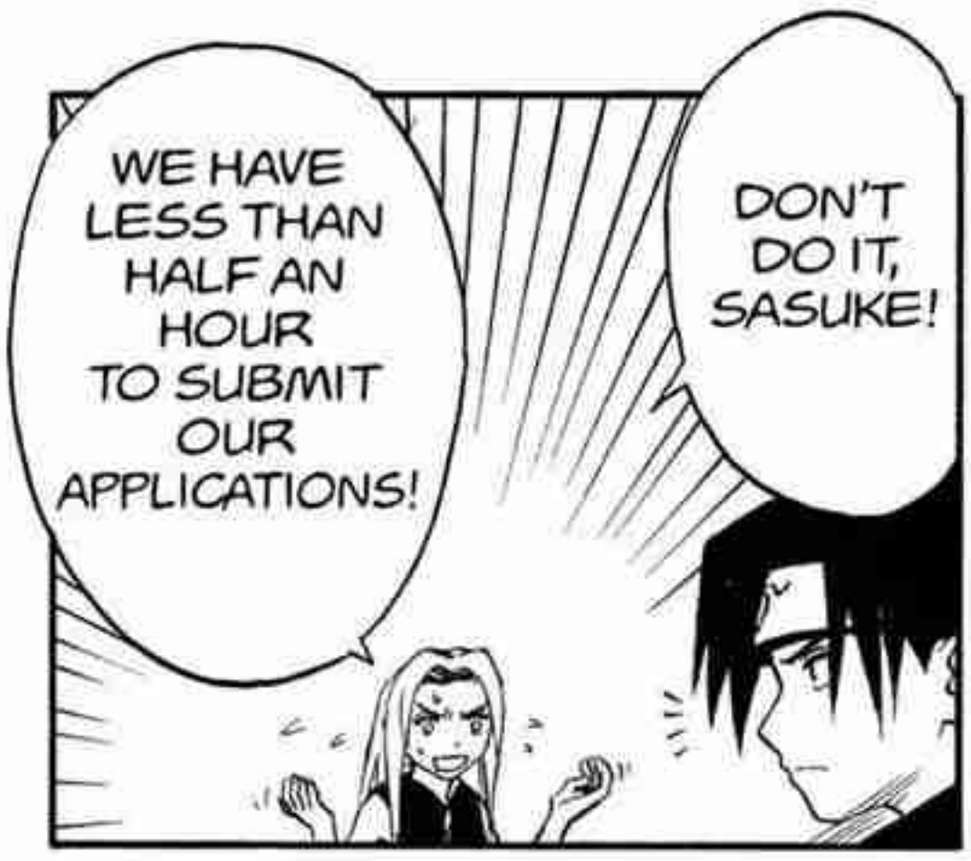
RIPPAA

GALE FORCE TECHNIQUE!!!

SPLAT

THUMPETY THUMP THUMP THUMP

HE'S PRETTY TOUGH AFTER ALL. AMAZING!
NONE OF YOU WILL BEAT ME.
MARK MY WORDS...
...AM THE GREATEST FIGHTER AMONG ALL THE JUNIOR NINJA IN KONOHA VILLAGE!
OOG...
I...
HE STOPPED MY KICK WITH HIS ARM. NO HUMAN ALIVE CAN DO THAT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TECHNIQUES HE'S USING... BUT I WANT TO FIND OUT!
THIS COULD BE FUN. I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE.


WE HAVE LESS THAN HALF AN HOUR TO SUBMIT OUR APPLICATIONS!
DON'T DO IT, SASUKE!

12
3
6
9

!
OH!

SASUKE!
THIS WILL ONLY TAKE FIVE MINUTES.
TAK

...I'M SORRY, MASTER GUY...I MAY HAVE TO BREAK THE BIG RULE!
I MIGHT NEED... THAT MOVE!

HERE GOES!!

KONOHA HURRICANE!!

!!!

FWAP

SHIKI

ABOVE ME!!

SHIP

NO TIME TO DUCK. GOTTA BLOCK!

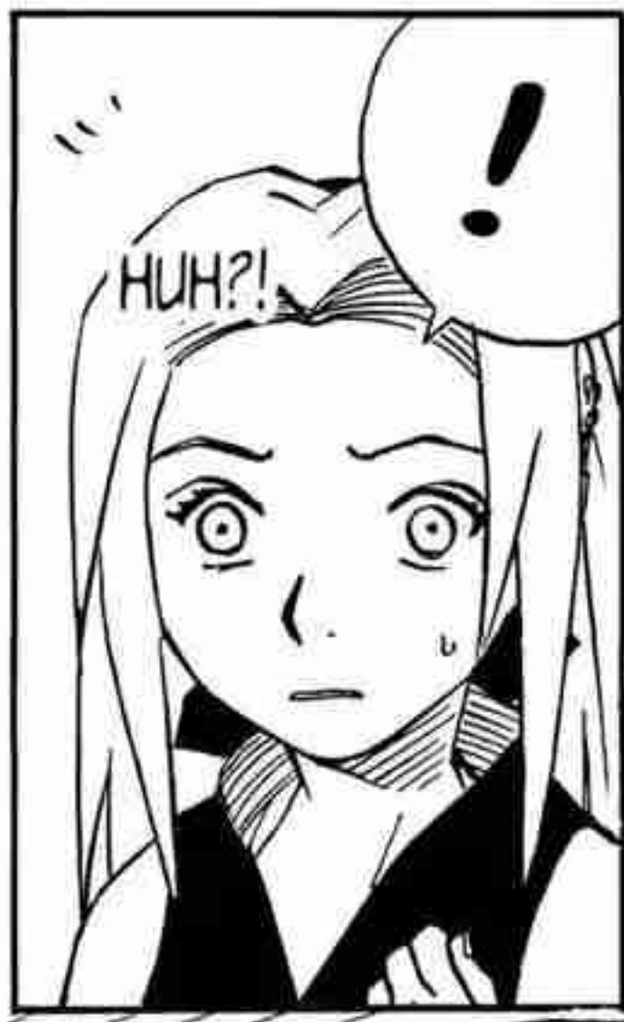
HOP

!!
WHAT?!
WHUP
SASUKE!!!
POW
IS THIS MARTIAL ARTS... OR MAGIC? AN ILLUSION?
HOW'D HE GET UNDER MY GUARD?
WHOA.
I THOUGHT SASUKE BLOCKED THAT!
WHAT... THE...?
THUD

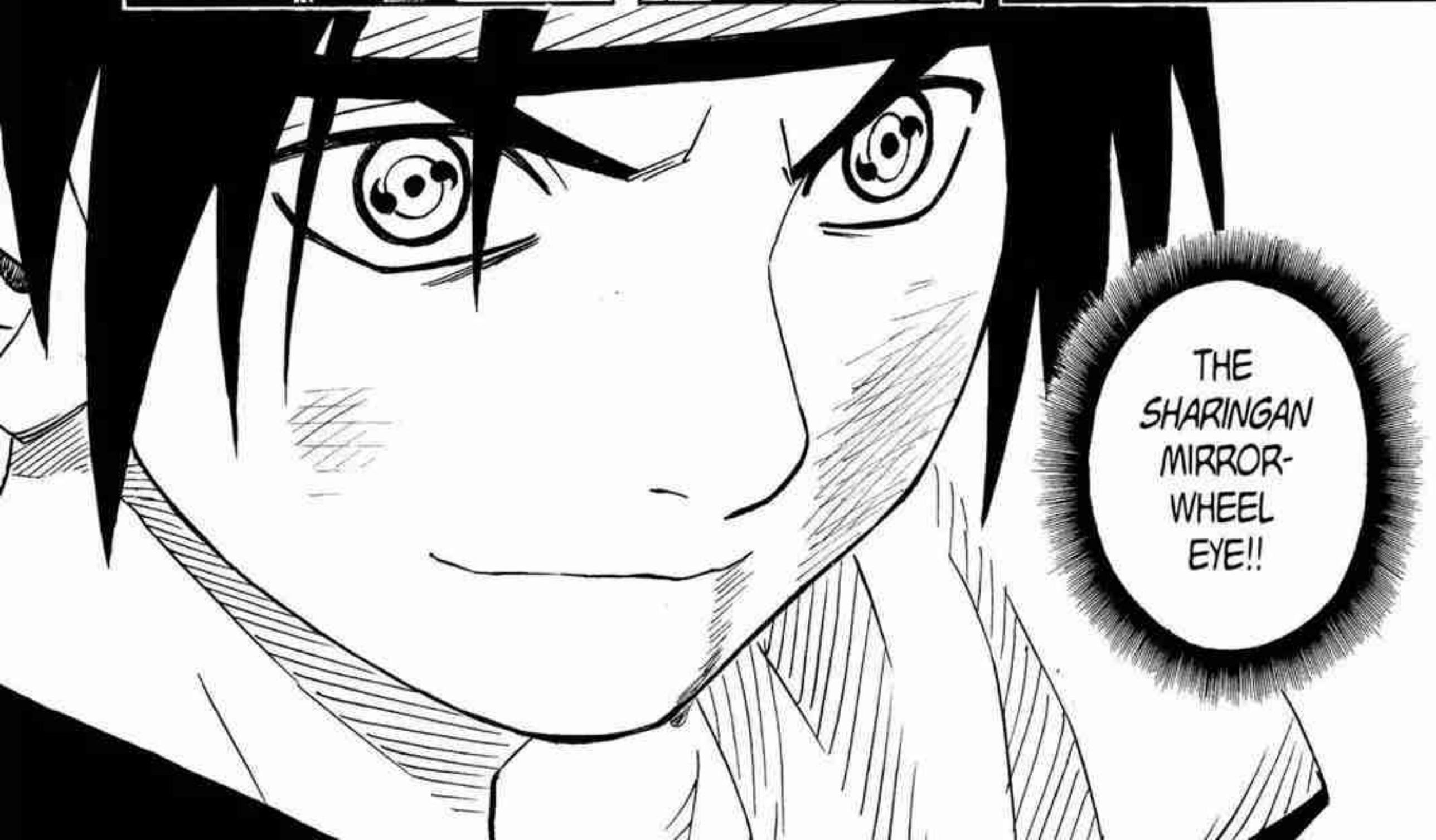
THIS MAY BE MY CHANCE TO GET IN A LITTLE PRACTICE USING... IT.
UGHN
FINE.

AS EXPECTED, HE'S COMING BACK FOR MORE!
THUP
COME ON

!!
TH - THAT LOOKS LIKE -


!
HUH?!

!

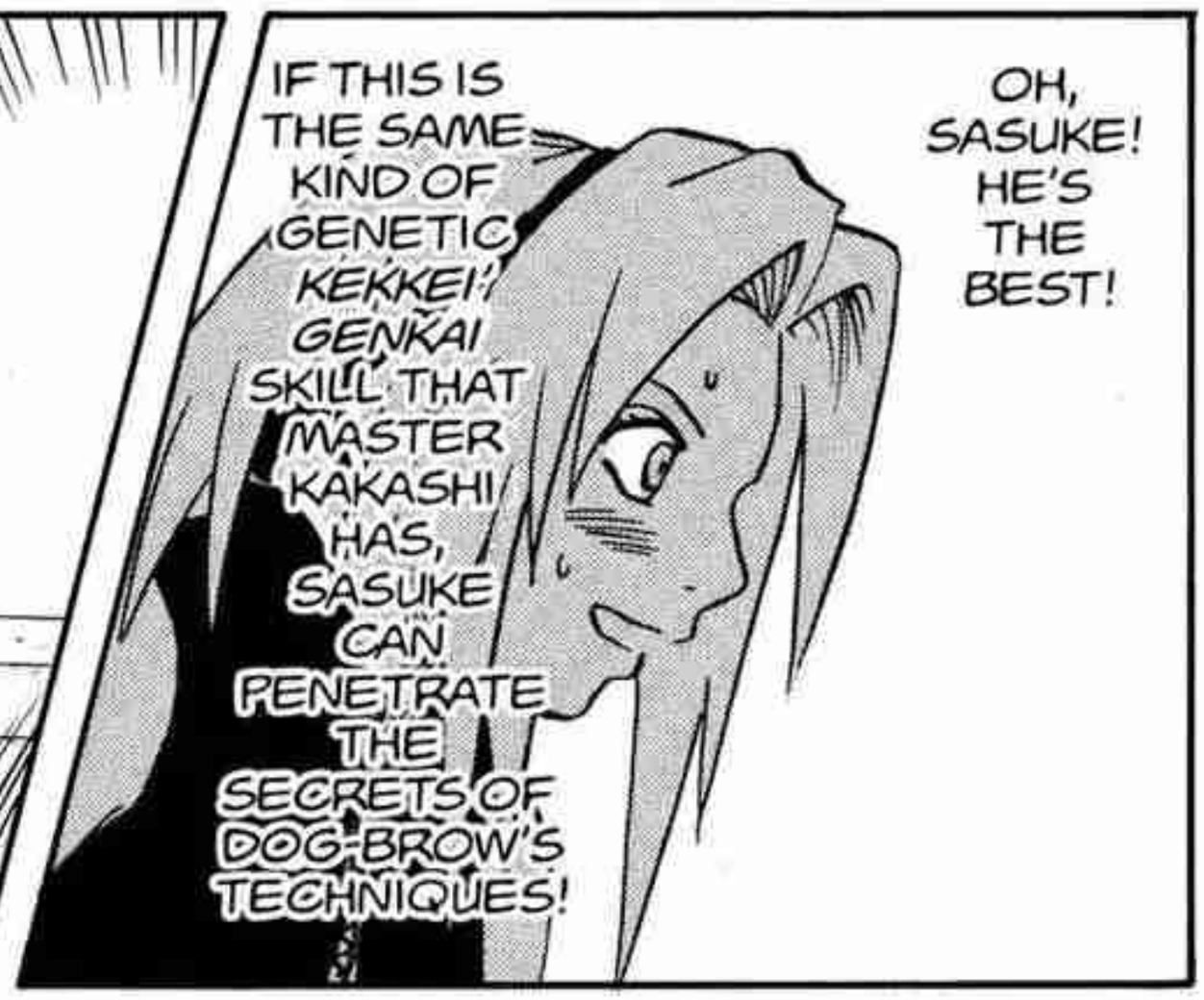

THE SHARINGAN MIRROR-WHEEL EYE!!

...

SO THAT'S THE FAMOUS SHARINGAN COPYCAT EYE...

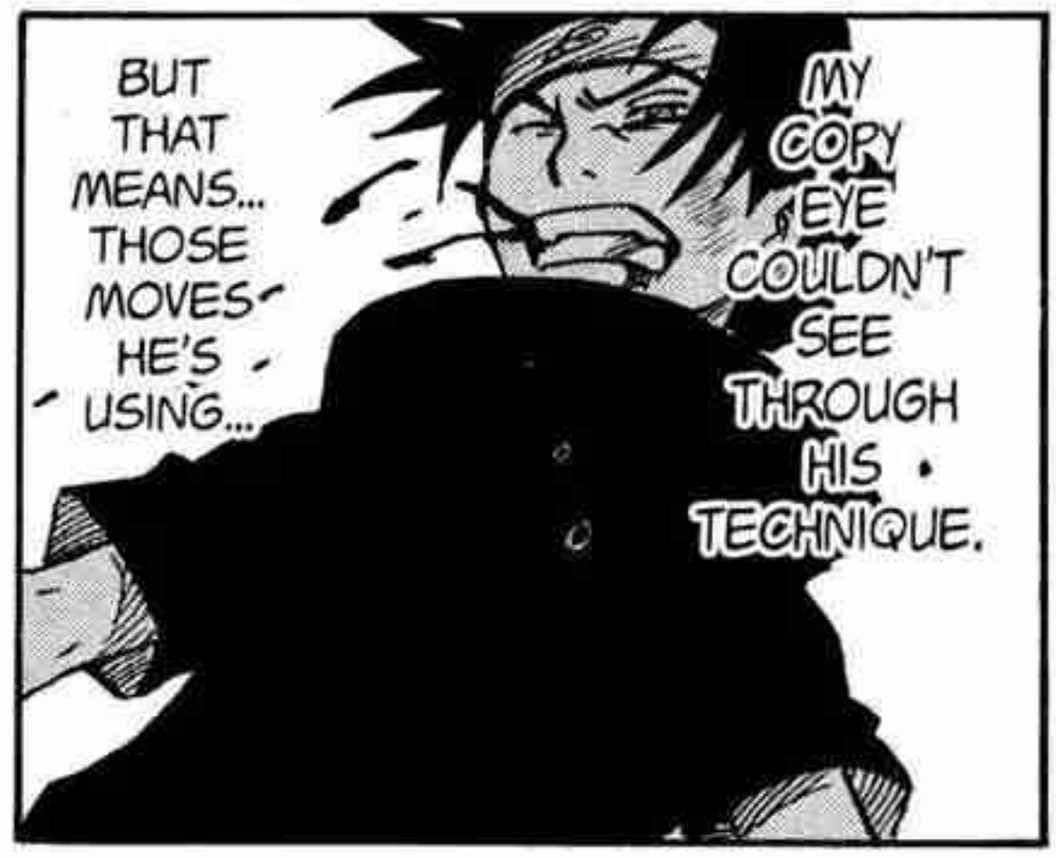
WHY SASUKE? AND WHY BOTH EYES?
BUT WHEN COULD SASUKE HAVE...?

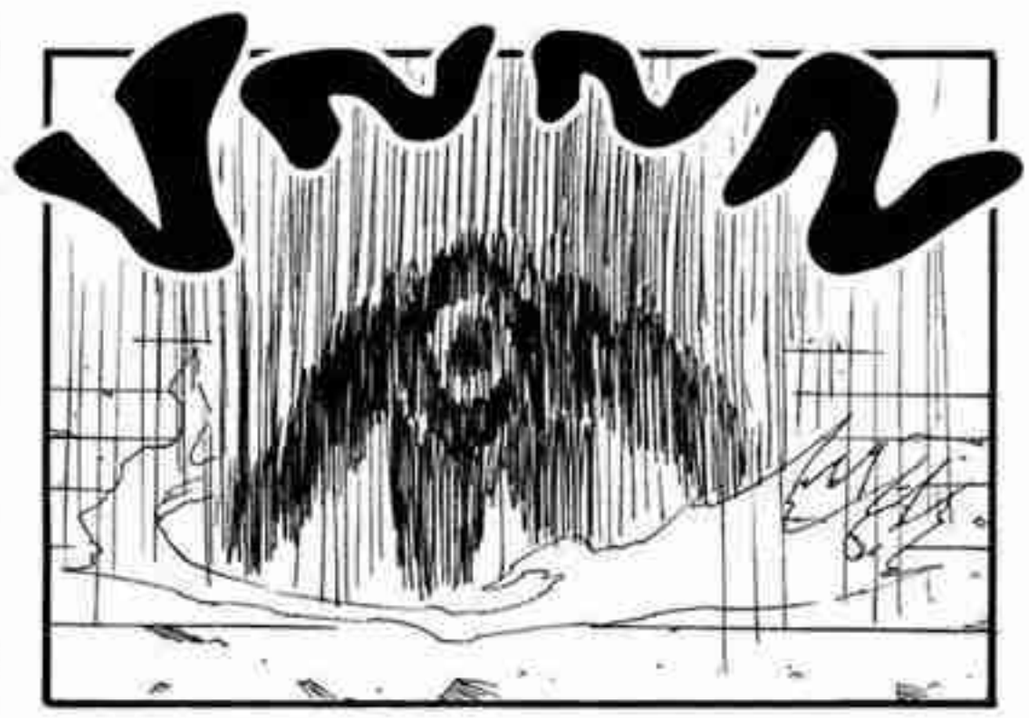
TA


IF THIS IS THE SAME KIND OF GENETIC KEKKEI-GENKAI SKILL THAT MASTER KAKASHI HAS, SASUKE CAN PENETRATE THE SECRETS OF DOG-BROW'S TECHNIQUES!
OH, SASUKE! HE'S THE BEST!

THERE'S NO WAY SOME SLIMY RUNT COULD BEAT HIM!
AND SASUKE'S GONNA TAKE IT APART!!
HE'S GETTING STRONGER ALL THE TIME. IT MUST BE HIS UCHIHA BLOOD!

WHETHER IT'S A GENJUTSU ILLUSION OR A NINJUTSU FIGHTING TECHNIQUE...
THERE'S SOME KIND OF MAGIC AT WORK HERE!





* ONE OF KONOHA-STYLE'S *TAIJUTSU* PHYSICAL ARTS: THE WARRIOR VISUALIZES HIS OPPONENT AS A WIND-TOSSED LEAF, AND THE WARRIOR PURSUES THAT LEAF BY MOVING AS THOUGH HE WERE ITS SHADOW.

HARD AS YOU MAY FIND IT TO ACCEPT...

THAT'S RIGHT. NO NINJUTSU. NO TRICKERY. MY MOVES ARE STRICTLY PHYSICAL.

I'M SURE YOUR *SHARINGAN* IS INVALUABLE AGAINST ARTS LIKE NINJUTSU AND GENJUTSU, WITH THEIR FORMALIZED RULES, SIGN-CASTING, AND CHAKRAS...

BUT PHYSICAL *TAIJUTSU* ARTS IN THEIR PURE FORM ARE A VERY DIFFERENT STORY.

... IF YOUR *SHARINGAN* EYE CAN SEE TO THE HEART OF EVERY NINJA ART WELL ENOUGH TO DUPLICATE IT, AS IT IS SAID TO, THEN YOU KNOW WHAT I SAY IS TRUE.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOUR EYE CAN SEE IF YOUR BODY'S TOO WEAK TO ACT!

EVEN IF YOU CAN PERFECTLY PERCEIVE AND UNDERSTAND MY MOVEMENTS, YOU LACK THE SPEED AND STRENGTH TO COUNTER THEM. YOU HAVEN'T HAD THE PHYSICAL TRAINING NECESSARY TO KEEP UP WITH ME!

IN OTHER WORDS, YOUR SUBTLE ARTS AND MY PHYSICAL PROWESS MAKE US A COMPLETE MISMATCH!
LET ME PROVE IT TO YOU.
YOUR SHARINGAN IS NATURAL-BORN GENIUS. I HEAR IT RUNS IN YOUR FAMILY.
WHAT I HAVE, I GOT THROUGH BLOOD, SWEAT, AND TEARS!
THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF STRENGTH. THE KIND YOU'RE BORN WITH... AND THE KIND YOU ONLY GET FROM BACK-BREAKING WORK.
WHAT'S HE UP TO?
THIS PARTICULAR MOVE OF MINE EXCEEDS YOUR GENIUS... COMPLETELY!
HALT!
IT'S-
SLICE
!!
HUNH?
UNNNG
THAT'S ENOUGH, LEE!
!!

# Number 38: On Your Mark

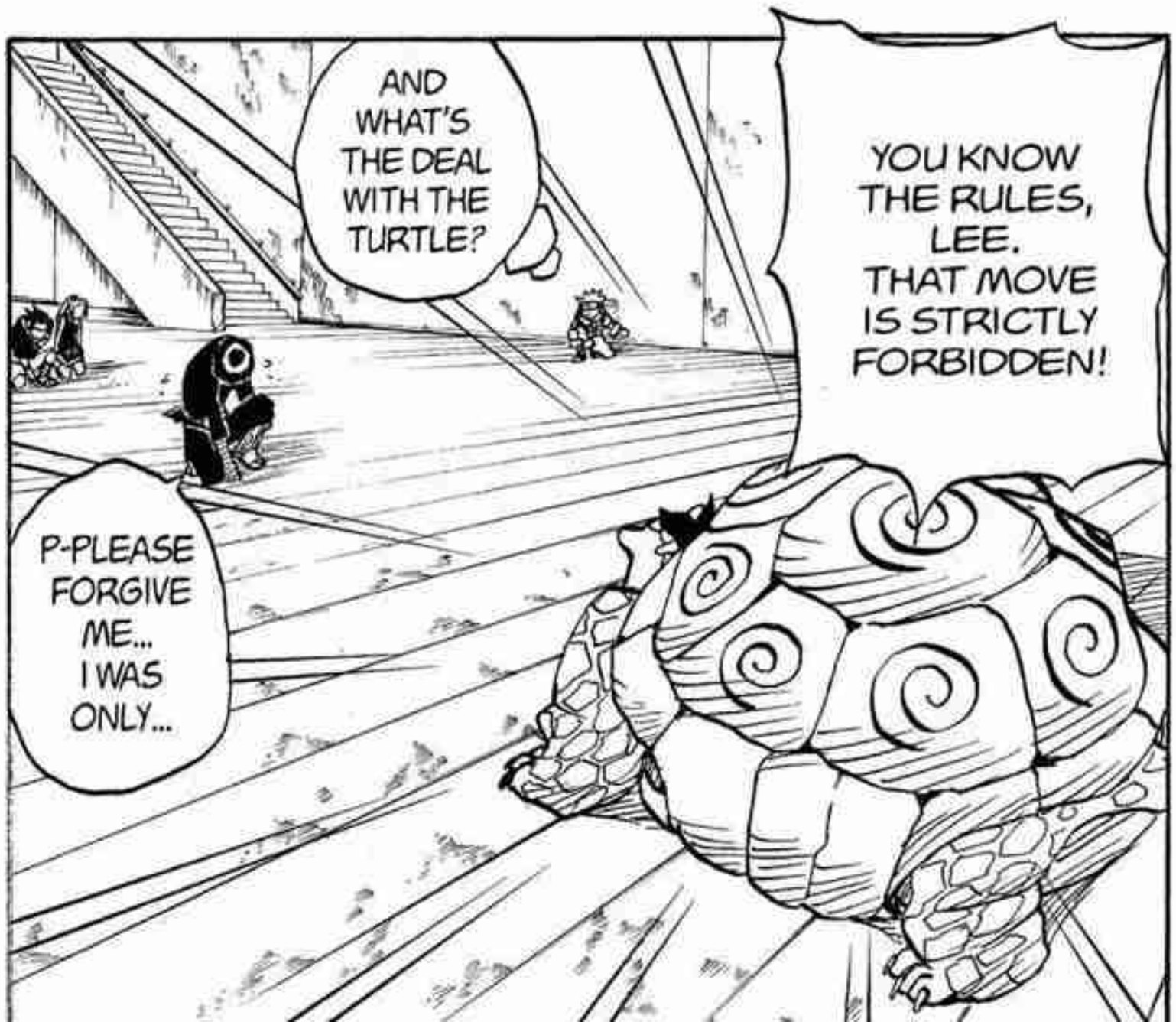
GURK!
TWIRL TWIRL
WHAT'S... HAPPENING...?
SASUKE!!!
TAK

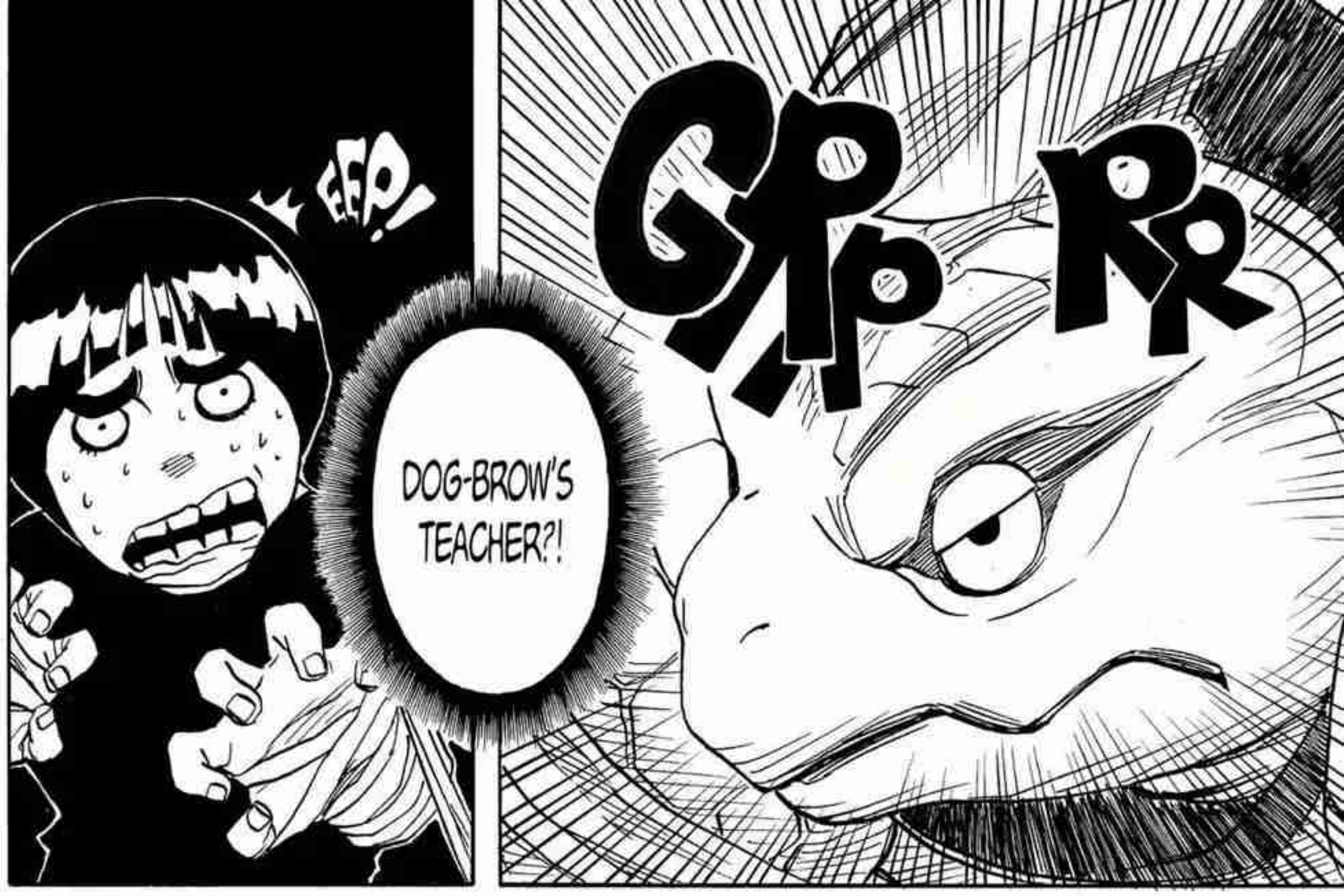
TEAM

TAP

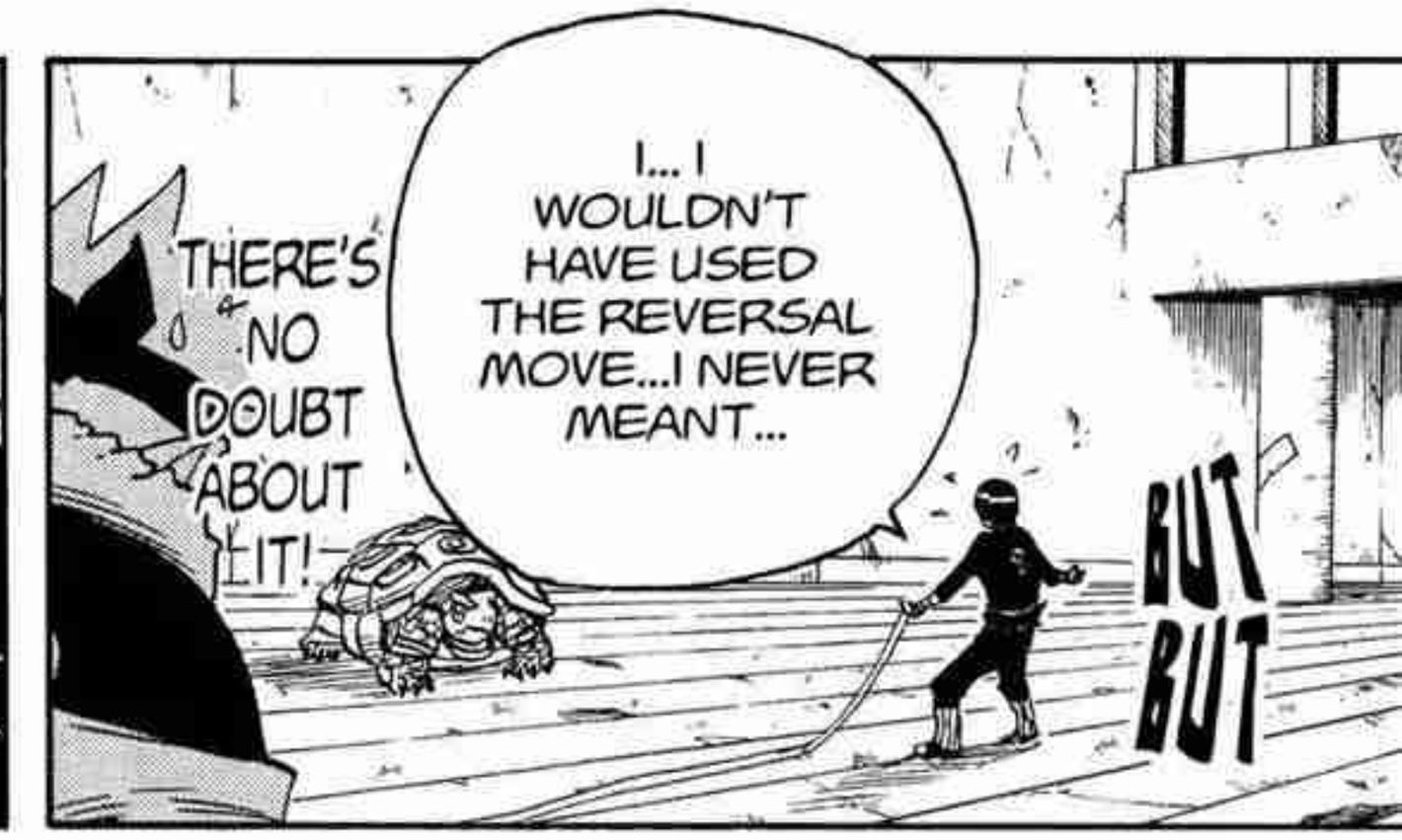
AIEE!!

SKIIIC




EEP!
DOG-BROW'S TEACHER?!
GRR

?


THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT!
I... I WOULDN'T HAVE USED THE REVERSAL MOVE...I NEVER MEANT...
BUT BUT

THAT'S A TURTLE...
RIGHT?
THAT THING OVER THERE...
!

TOK TOK
HEY!! HEY!
!
WHAT?

YIPE!
YOU FOOL!!
DON'T ASK STUPID QUESTIONS!!
SO WHAT'S THE DEAL HERE? CAN TURTLES BECOME NINJA?
OBVIOUSLY!!!
SKKKRAPE SKRRRRAPE
...

OHHH...

CONSIDER THE REPERCUSSIONS OF A SHINOBI WARRIOR-- ANY SHINOBI-- BALDLY EXPLAINING ALL HIS SECRETS!
Y-YES, SIR!
DO YOU THINK I CARE ABOUT YOUR FEEBLE EXCUSES?
SKKKRAPE SKRRRRAPE

WELL, THEN... HE'S ALL YOURS, MASTER GUY!
Y-YES, SIR...
BIK

I HOPE YOU ARE PROPERLY PREPARED?
WHAT A DISGRACE, LOSING TO THAT CLOWN!

OMG
GLARE
AH, THE EXUBERANCE OF YOUTH. ALL OF YOU ARE FULL OF IT.

YAAAAAGH!!!
!!
!
THEY'RE ALMOST... ALIVE...
HE'S GOT THE BIGGEST EYEBROWS YET!
GRR
RRRR
H-HEY!! DON'T TRY TO MAKE FUN OF MASTER GUY!!
THEY'RE... UBER-BROWS!
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE 'EM!
AND THAT SAME DORKY 'DO...
LEE!
WHAT--
OH! UH, YES, SIR...
HUNH?
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF ALL THE FREAKS WHO KEEP POPPING IN HERE!!
RRRRRRRR
OH, SHUT UP!

OWW!!

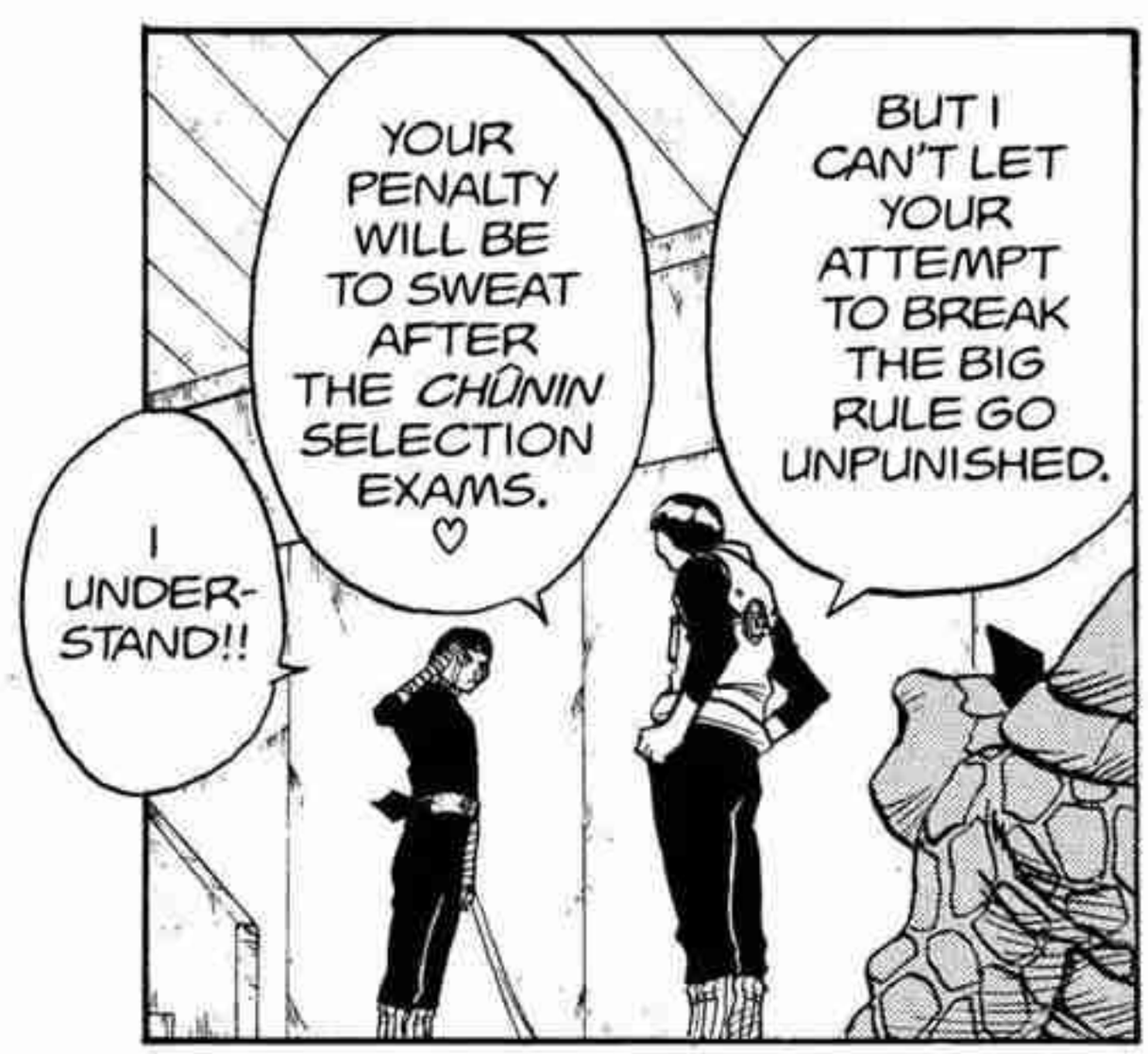
BLEED

IDIOT!!

I GOT BEATEN... BY SOME TOUCHY-FEELY CRYBABY!
EWWW...
?!

DON'T BE AN IDIOT! THEY'RE UP TO SOMETHING!
DOESN'T IT GIVE YOU A WARM, FUZZY FEELING?

HUG
I UNDERSTAND. IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE YOUNG!
MASTER!


YOUR PENALTY WILL BE TO SWEAT AFTER THE CHŪNIN SELECTION EXAMS. ♡
BUT I CAN'T LET YOUR ATTEMPT TO BREAK THE BIG RULE GO UNPUNISHED.
I UNDER-STAND!!

YOU ARE TOO KIND... MASTER!!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, LEE! MISTAKES AND YOUTH GO HAND IN HAND.
PAT

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THAT TURTLE THING, ANYWAY?

WHAT A DIP...

...

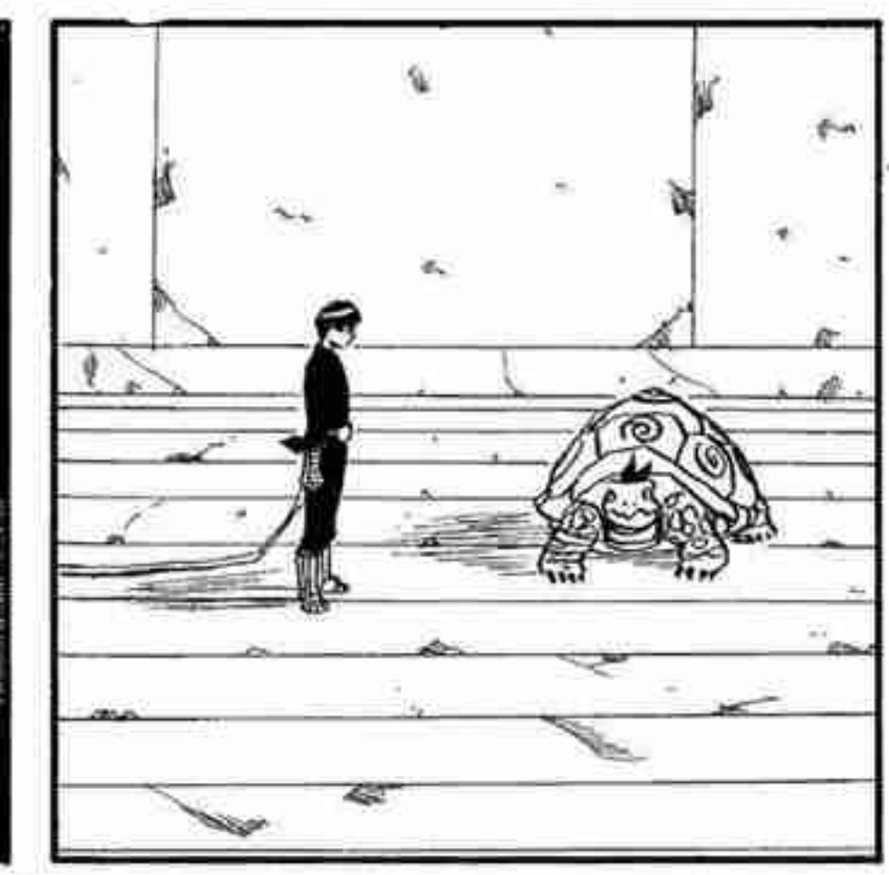
YES, SIR!!

FIVE HUNDRED LAPS AROUND THE PRACTICE ARENA!!

READ THIS WAY

?

HUNH?!



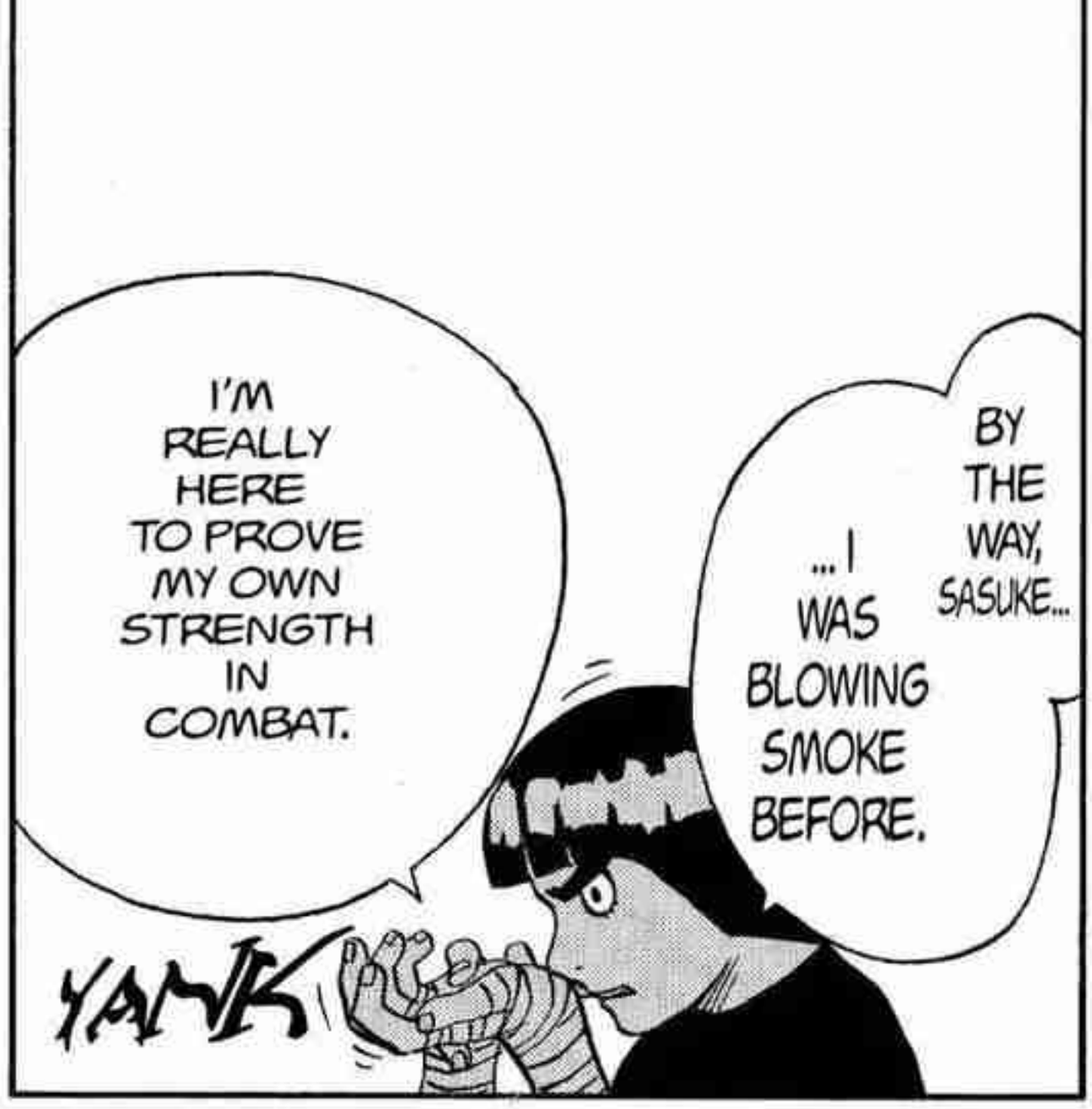
!!!
...
I SHOULD SAY SO! WE'RE ARCH-RIVALS!

HEY! HOW'D HE...?!

THE SCORE STANDS AT FIFTY TO FORTY-NINE.

HE...

CHUK
YOU AND LEE SHOULD HEAD UP TO THE CLASSROOM NOW.
!!!
!
FLUP FLUP
!!
HE'S...

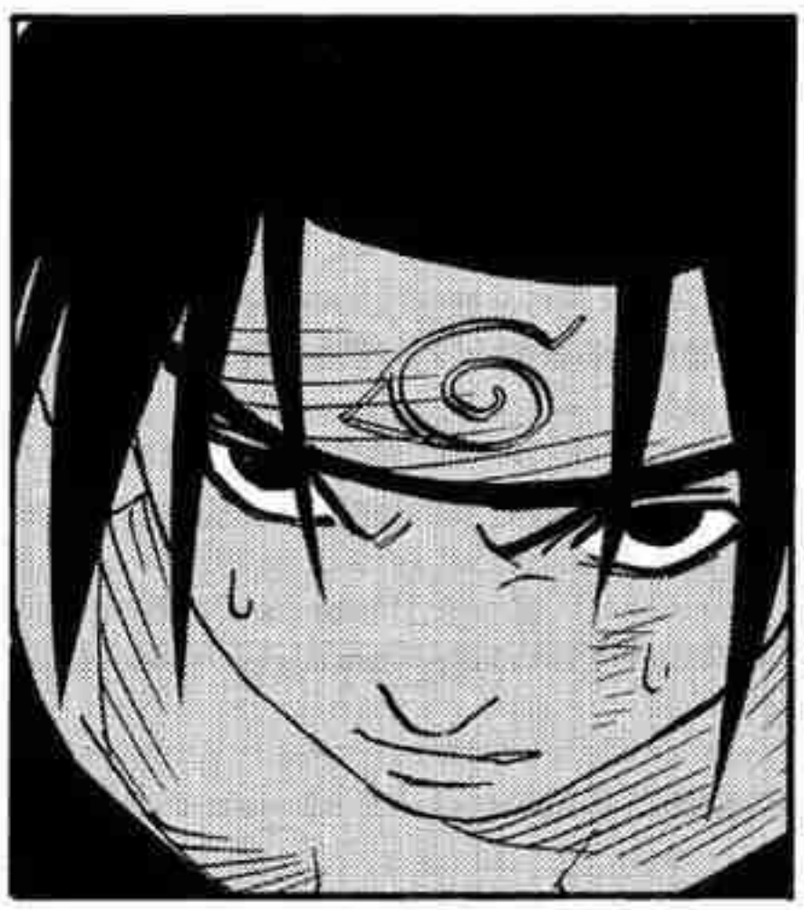

I'M REALLY HERE TO PROVE MY OWN STRENGTH IN COMBAT.
YANK
...I WAS BLOWING SMOKE BEFORE.
BY THE WAY, SASUKE...

TAK
BEST OF LUCK, LEE!
LATER!!
YES, SIR!

OFF TO APPLY FOR THE EXAM. BE READY FOR IT, OKAY?
HOP
...

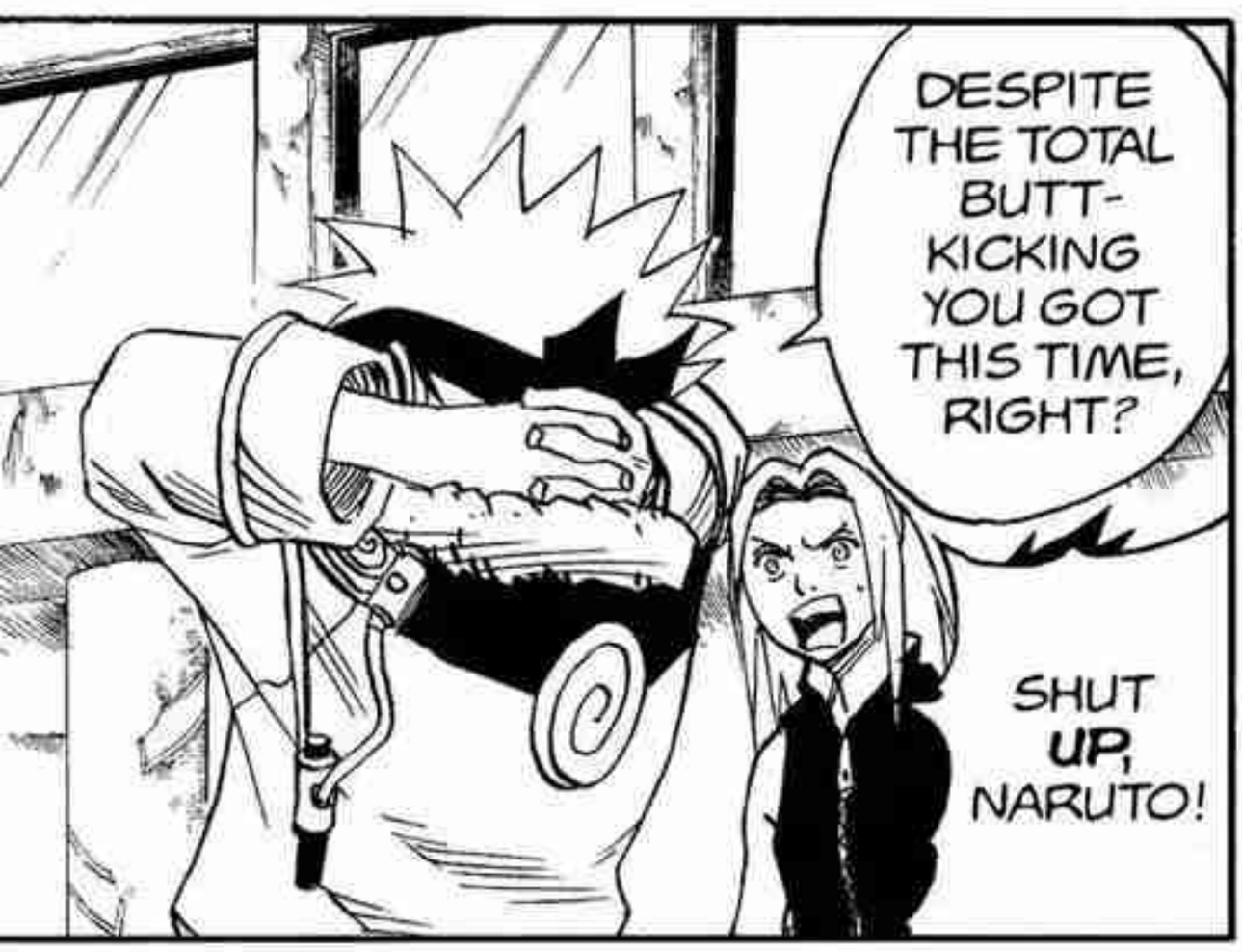
THE STRONGEST JUNIOR NINJA IS A MEMBER OF MY OWN TEAM... ...AND I INTEND TO TAKE HIM DOWN.
AND I DON'T THINK YOU'RE THE STRONGEST KONOHA GENIN.
THAT'S WHY I'M ENTERING. AND BY THE WAY... YOU'RE ON MY LIST, TOO.

SASUKE...
WHAT WAS THAT CRAP?!



KRUNCH

... SHUT UP...
NARUTO!!
MAYBE YOUR HOT-SNOT, FAMOUS UCHIHA CLAN ISN'T THAT GREAT AFTER ALL, HUH?


DESPITE THE TOTAL BUTT-KICKING YOU GOT THIS TIME, RIGHT?
SHUT UP, NARUTO!

NEXT TIME, HE'S DEAD MEAT.

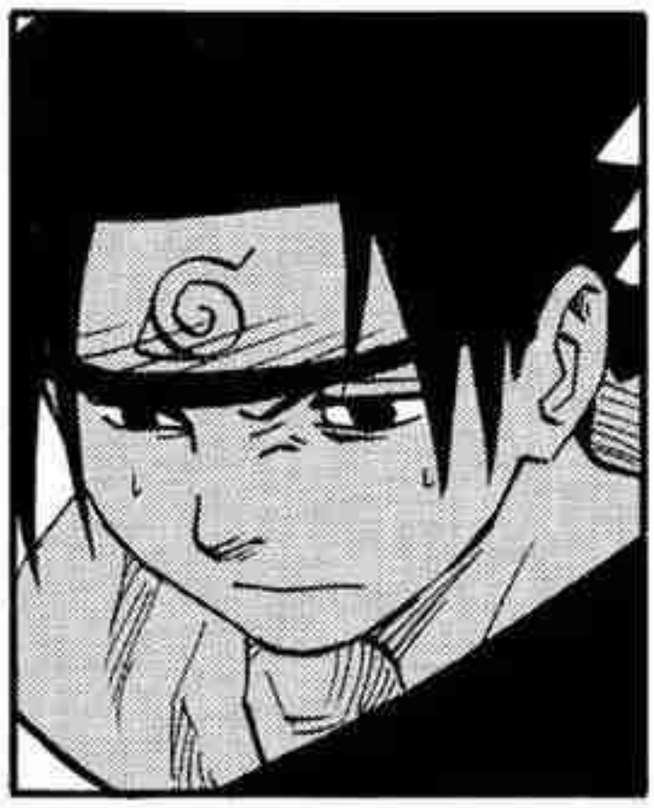
YOU SAW HIS HANDS, RIGHT?

GRRRRR

OLD DOGGY BROWS PROBABLY GETS SOME KIND OF SUPER-DUPER EXTRA-SPECIAL TRAINING, DAY AFTER DAY!

YOU'RE TOAST, PAL!

EVEN MORE THAN YOU GOT.



INTERESTING...

ONWC

NARUTO? SAKURA? LET'S GO!

YEAH!!

301
GLAD YOU MADE IT AFTER ALL, SAKURA.
...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
!
THIS WAY YOU ALL QUALIFY TO APPLY FOR THE CHÛNIN SELECTION EXAM.
BUT... MASTER KAKASHI, YOU SAID IT WAS UP TO EACH OF US TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO APPLY. WERE YOU LYING?
THE WAY THE TEST IS SET UP, IT CAN ONLY BE TAKEN BY THREE-PERSON CELLS.

...AND YOU'D HAVE COME ALONG AND GONE THROUGH THE MOTIONS, THOUGH YOUR HEART WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN IN IT.
EVEN IF YOU HAD NO INTEREST IN APPLYING, ONE WORD FROM SASUKE...
301
I SAID WHAT I HAD TO TO KEEP YOUR PARTNERS FROM PRESSURING YOU INTO COMING ALONG.
NOW GET IN THERE!
BUT YOU'RE ALL HERE BECAUSE YOU WANT TO BE. AND I'M VERY, VERY PROUD OF YOU.
I'D HAVE WASHED THEM OUT RIGHT HERE. NONE OF YOU WOULD HAVE GOTTEN PAST THIS POINT WITHOUT BOTH OF THE OTHERS.
WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF SASUKE AND NARUTO HAD SHOWN UP WITHOUT ME?
LOOK OUT EVERYBODY, 'CAUSE HERE WE COME!!
CREAK

WINK

# 39: THE CHALLENGERS!!

SHINOBI
SHINOBI
SHINOBI

39: The Challengers!!

ARE THEY ALL HERE TO APPLY?

SO MANY PEOPLE.

HUGGG

SASUKE! WHERE'VE YOU BEEN, CUTIE? ♡

!!

THEY LOOK... INCREDIBLE...

ULP!

HELLO TO YOU, TOO, SAKURA.

INO, YOU PIG!!! GET YOUR HOOVES OFF SASUKE!

STILL HOPING THE BIG, MUTANT FOREHEAD LOOK IS GOING TO COME INTO FASHION, HUH? HOW SWEET. ♡

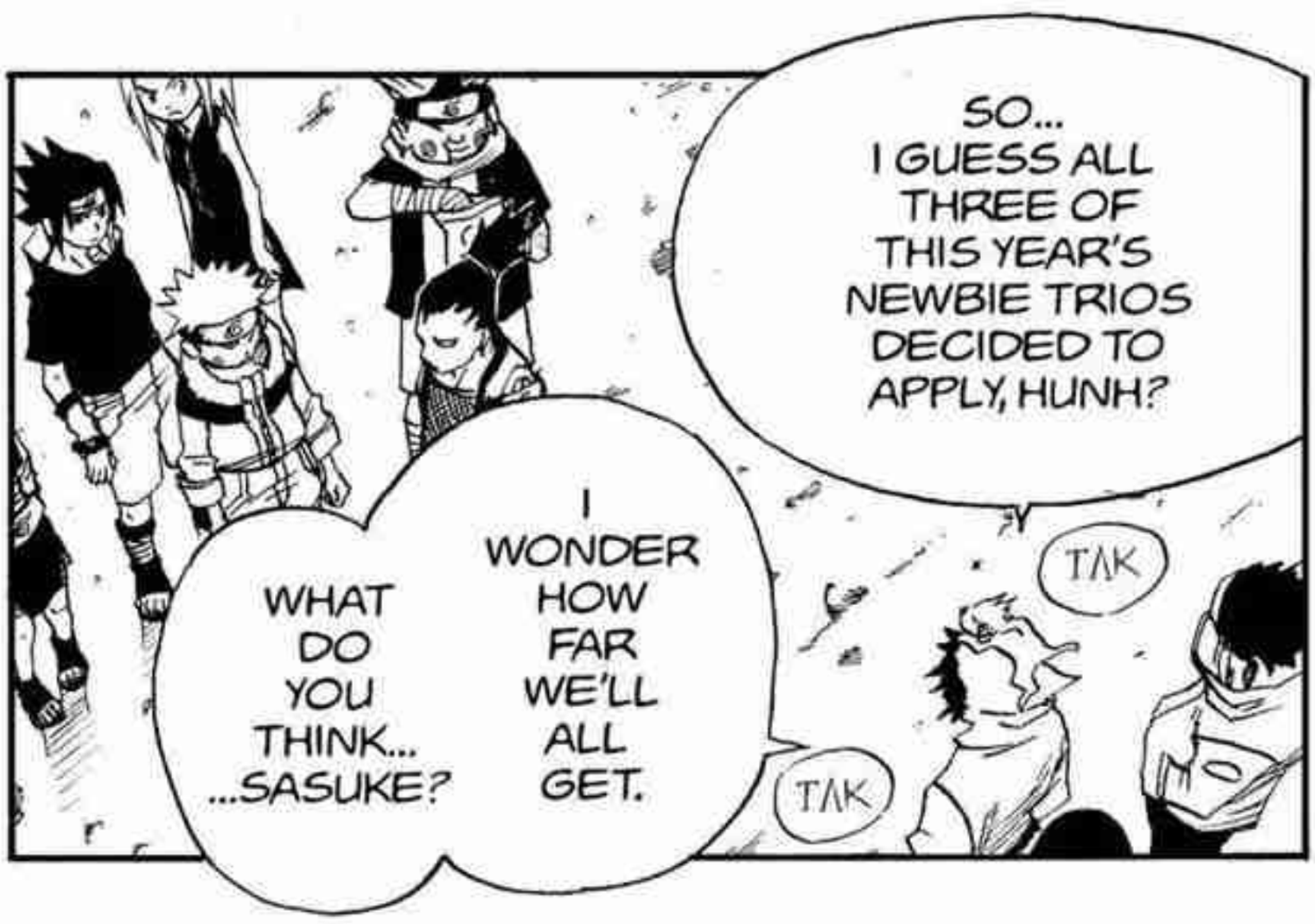
I COULD HARDLY WAIT! IT'S SO EXCITING, SEEING YOU AGAIN AFTER ALL THIS TIME!

STOP CALLING US THAT!
WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE THREE STOOGES!
MUNCH
TAK
WHY DON'T YOU THREE SAVE YOURSELVES THE EMBARRASSMENT OF FLUNKING THIS TEST? GO DIE, OKAY?
BLEAH!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
MUNCH
ASUMA CELL NUMBER 10
AKIMICHI CHOJI A LITTLE PORKER WHO'S ALWAYS STUFFING HIS FACE.
FAT FOOL.
WHAT A PAIN IN THE BUTT.
ASUMA CELL NUMBER 10
NARA SHIKAMARU A LAZY, UNMOTIVATED, GOOD-FOR-NOTHING, FULL OF NOTHING BUT COMPLAINTS.
WHINING FOOL.
HEY! THERE YOU ARE!
SHINOBI
OOH!
GONNA MAKE SASUKE MINE! ♡ BLEAH!
ASUMA CELL NUMBER 10
YAMANAKA INO SAKURA'S RIVAL AND ARCH-NEMESIS, AND ANOTHER WOULD-BE SASUKE GROUPIE.
FOOL FOR SASUKE.

HHHHNNNNNN

LOOKS LIKE THE GANG'S ALL HERE.

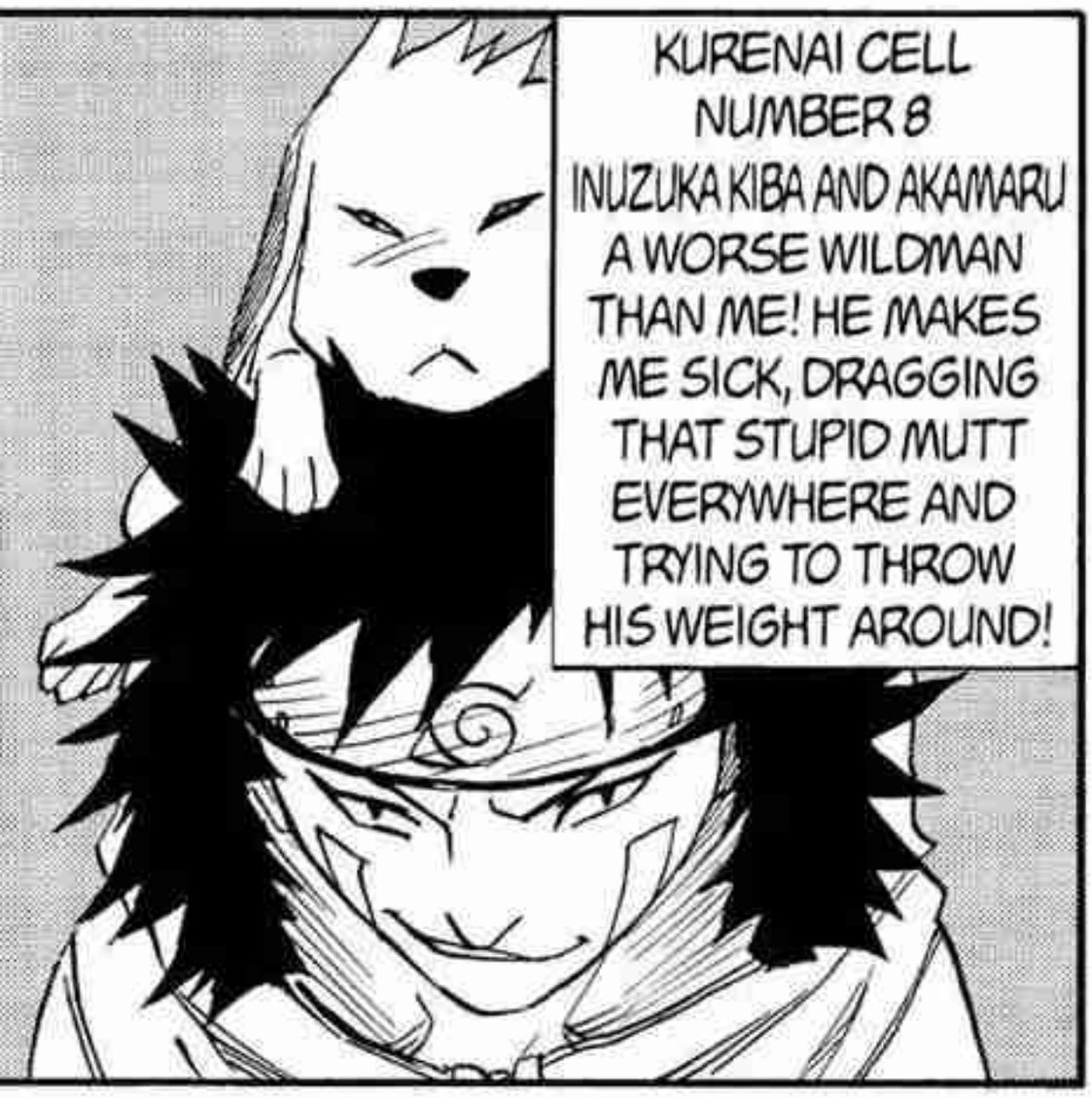
UH... HI...



HUNH?
GRRRR

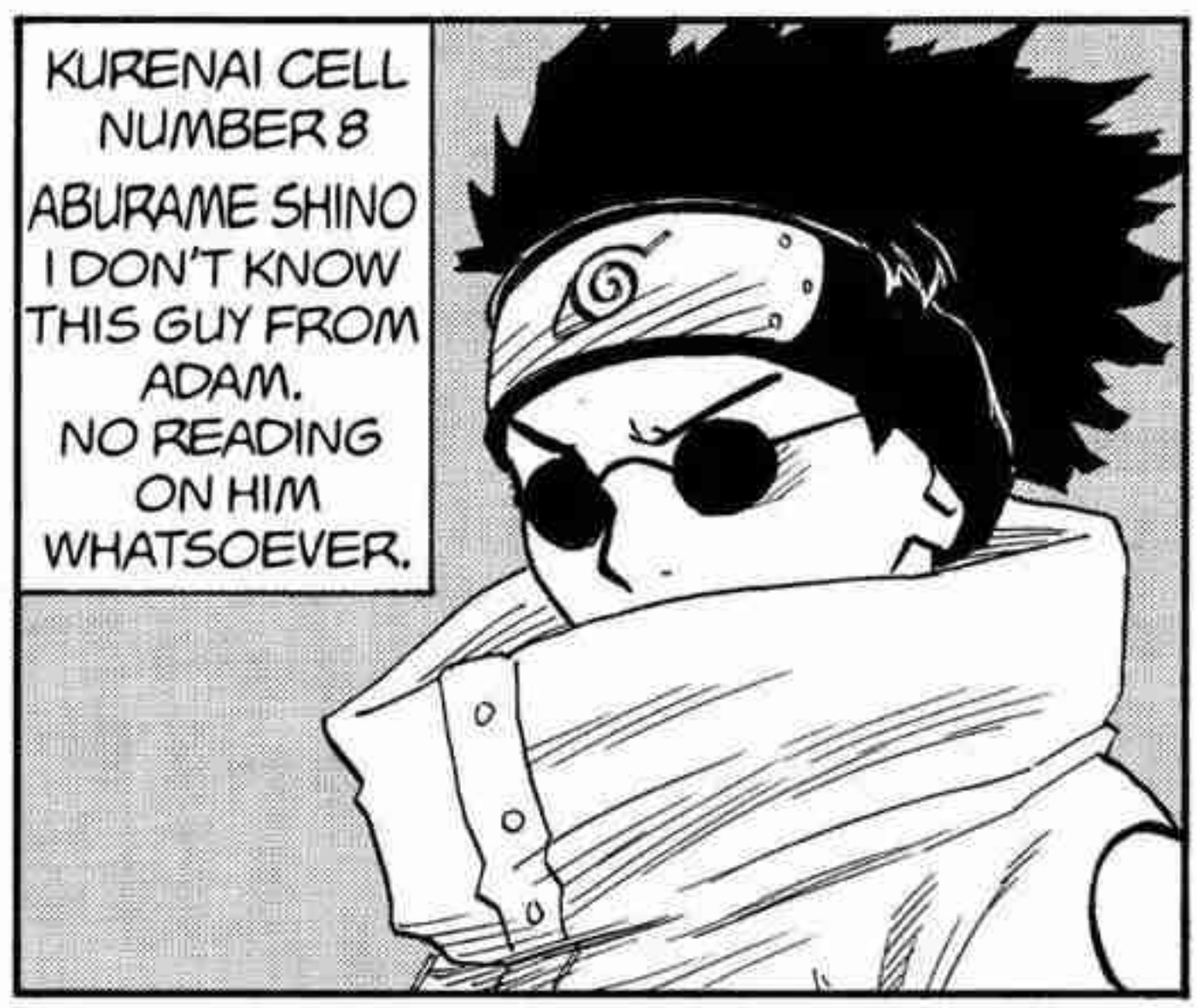
THAT DOG WOULD PROBABLY BE GREAT WITH SOME HOT SAUCE.....
MUNCH
MUNCH

KIBA DIDN'T MEAN THAT THE WAY IT SOUNDED...
I-I'M SORRY, NARUTO...
UMM
UMM
UH


KURENAI CELL NUMBER 8
INUZUKA KIBA AND AKAMARU
A WORSE WILDMAN THAN ME! HE MAKES ME SICK, DRAGGING THAT STUPID MUTT EVERYWHERE AND TRYING TO THROW HIS WEIGHT AROUND!

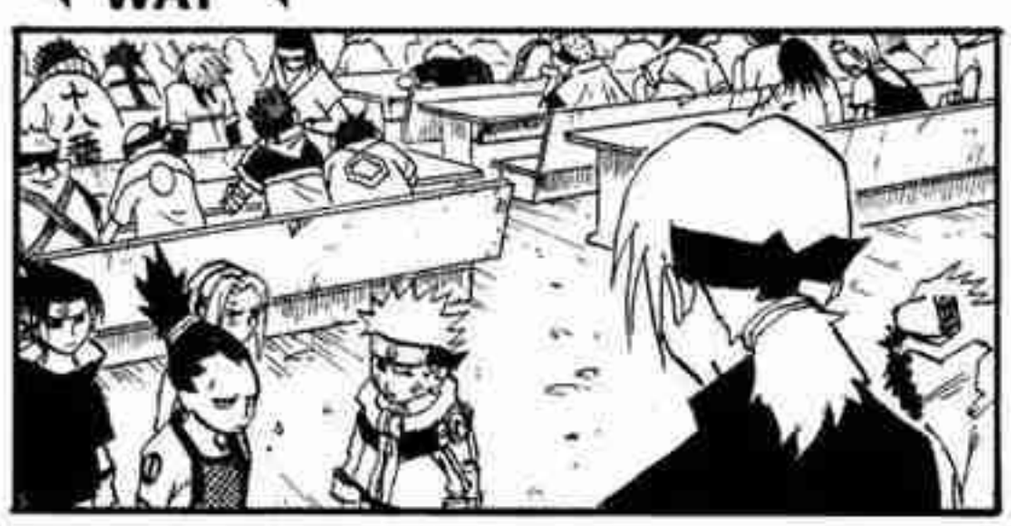
KURENAI CELL NUMBER 8
HYUGA HINATA
A WORLD-CLASS FREAK WHO WON'T EVEN LOOK ME IN THE EYE. A SHY LITTLE BRUNETTE.

...DO US ALL A FAVOR AND JUST SHUT UP?
WOULD YOU GUYS...

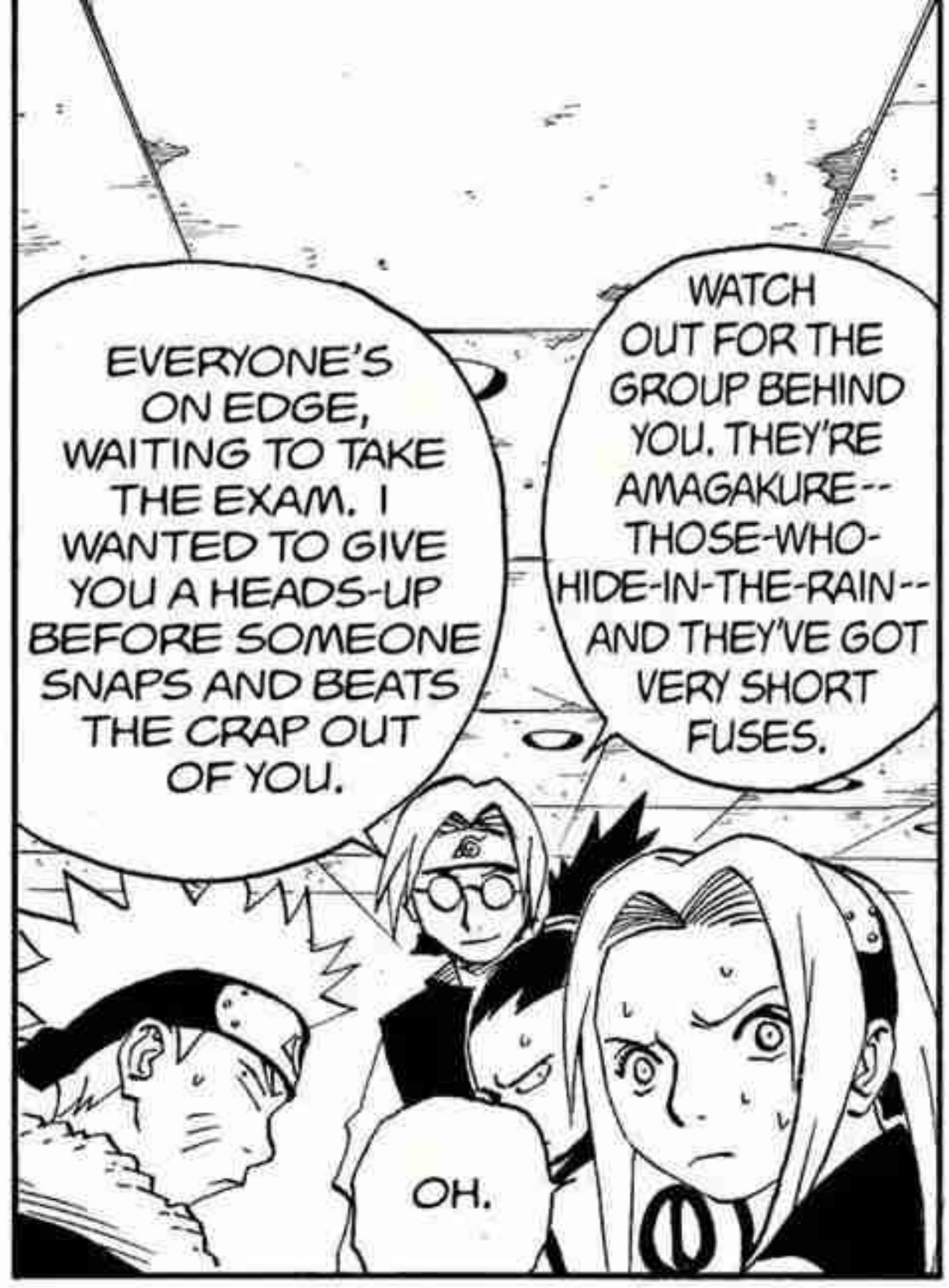

KURENAI CELL NUMBER 8
ABURAME SHINO
I DON'T KNOW THIS GUY FROM ADAM. NO READING ON HIM WHATSOEVER.

TAK
ALL WET-BEHIND-THE-EARS AND RUNNY-NOSED!
YOU THREE GANGS OF WOULD-BE HOTSHOTS ARE ALL GENIN, RIGHT? KIDS BARELY OUT OF THE LOCAL NINJA ACADEMY?
WHO THE HECK DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
THIS ISN'T A SCHOOL FIELD TRIP, YOU KNOW.
WHY?
NAME'S KABUTO. SO WHAT?
YOU KIDS NEED TO OPEN YOUR EYES.
GRRRR

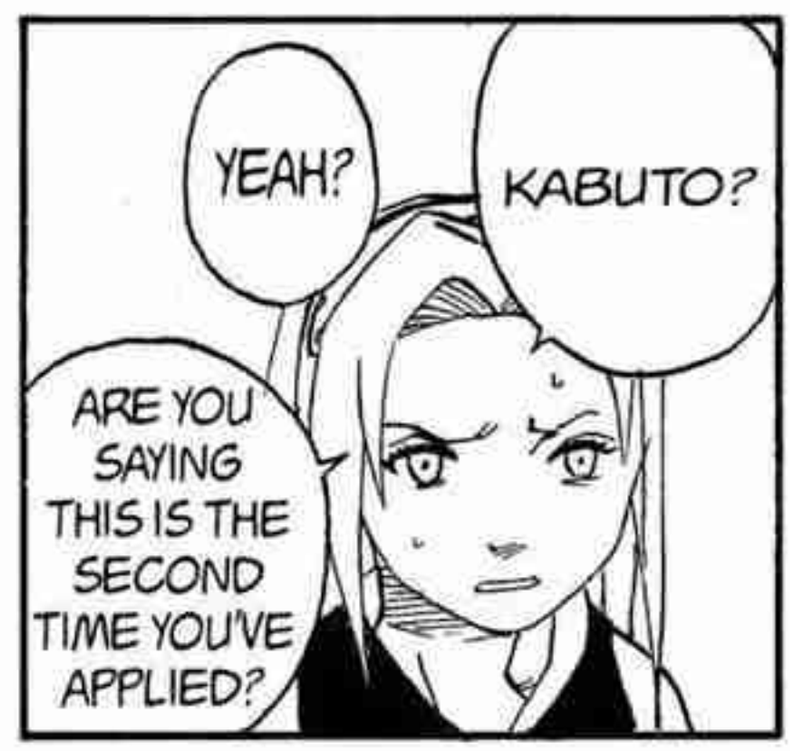
READ
THIS
WAY



I REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS LIKE.
BUT IT'S PROBABLY UNAVOIDABLE. LIKE ALL ROOKIES, YOU THINK YOU ALREADY KNOW EVERYTHING.

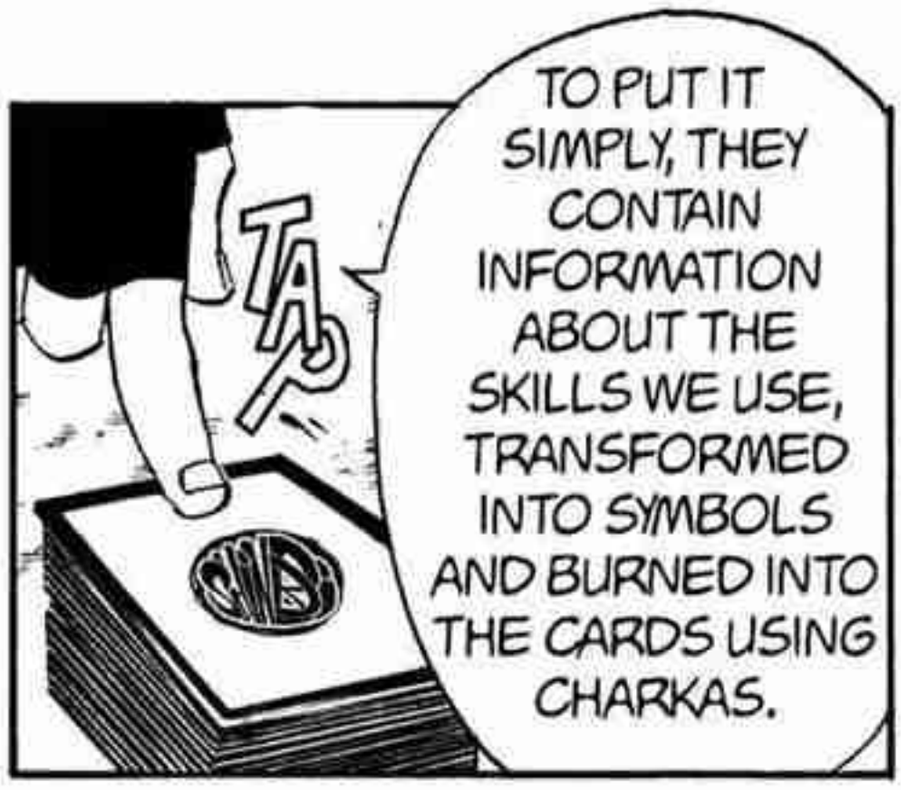

EVERYONE'S ON EDGE, WAITING TO TAKE THE EXAM. I WANTED TO GIVE YOU A HEADS-UP BEFORE SOMEONE SNAPS AND BEATS THE CRAP OUT OF YOU.
WATCH OUT FOR THE GROUP BEHIND YOU. THEY'RE AMAGAKURE-- THOSE-WHO-HIDE-IN-THE-RAIN-- AND THEY'VE GOT VERY SHORT FUSES.
OH.

SEVENTH.
NOT SECOND...
TWICE A YEAR FOR... HM, GOING ON FOUR YEARS NOW.


YEAH?
KABUTO?
ARE YOU SAYING THIS IS THE SECOND TIME YOU'VE APPLIED?

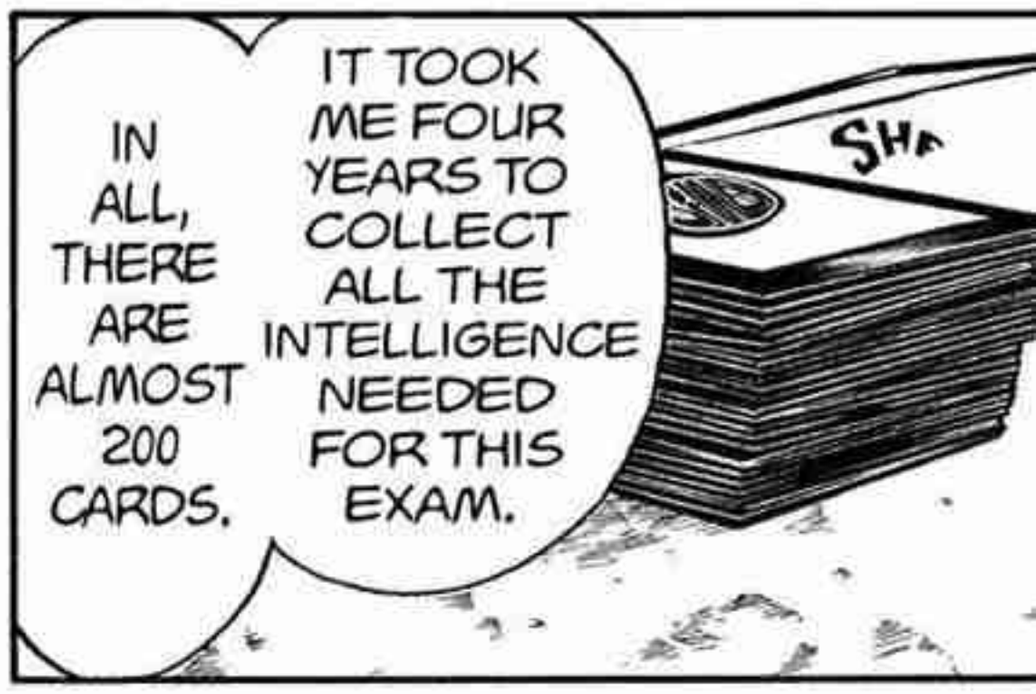
...WITH THESE SHINOBI SKILL CARDS.
CUTE. OKAY... THE LEAST I CAN DO IS GIVE YOU SWEET LITTLE BABIES SOME VITAL INTELLIGENCE ON WHAT YOU'RE IN FOR..
FLIP

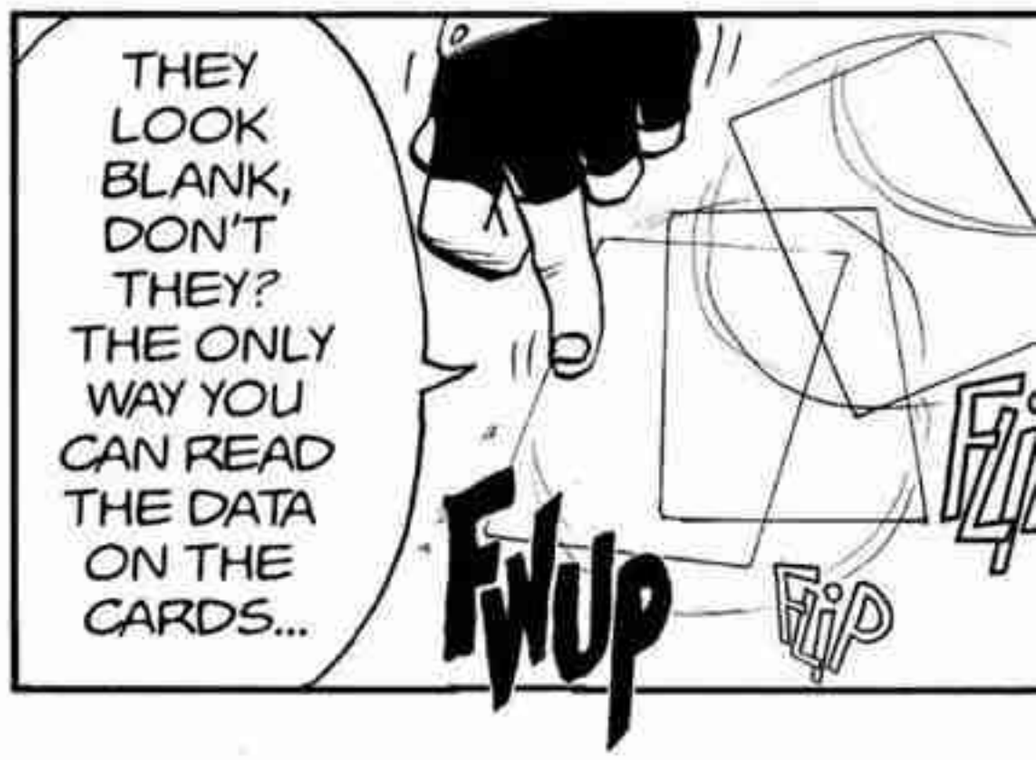
ALL RIGHT! KABUTO, BUDDY... YOU ARE THE MAN!! ♡
I GUESS SO.
WOW-- THEN YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF EXPERIENCE WITH WHAT WE CAN EXPECT!

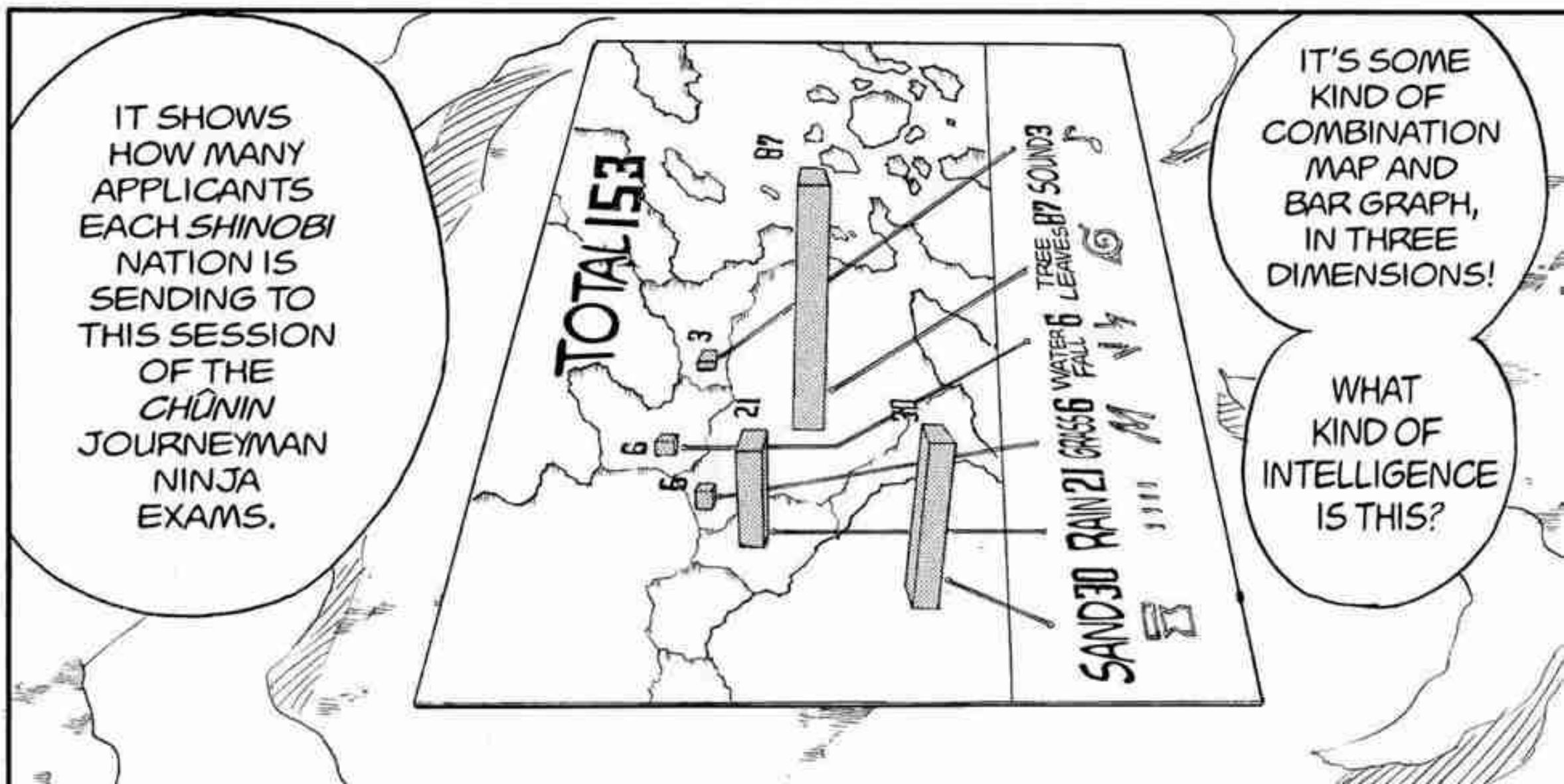

TO PUT IT SIMPLY, THEY CONTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE SKILLS WE USE, TRANSFORMED INTO SYMBOLS AND BURNED INTO THE CARDS USING CHARKAS.
TAP

SHINOBI SKILL CARDS?

...IS BY USING MY OWN PERSONAL CHAKRA. EACH SET IS LINKED TO ITS POSSESSOR. FOR EXAMPLE, CARDS LIKE THIS ONE...
WHAT'S HE DOING?
BONNNG


IN ALL, THERE ARE ALMOST 200 CARDS.
IT TOOK ME FOUR YEARS TO COLLECT ALL THE INTELLIGENCE NEEDED FOR THIS EXAM.


THEY LOOK BLANK, DON'T THEY? THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN READ THE DATA ON THE CARDS...
FWUP
FIP


IT SHOWS HOW MANY APPLICANTS EACH SHINOBI NATION IS SENDING TO THIS SESSION OF THE CHÛNIN JOURNEYMAN NINJA EXAMS.
TOTAL 153
SAND 30 RAIN 21 GRASS 6 WATER FALL 6 TREE LEAVES 87 SOUND 3
IT'S SOME KIND OF COMBINATION MAP AND BAR GRAPH, IN THREE DIMENSIONS!
WHAT KIND OF INTELLIGENCE IS THIS?

...INCLUDING YOUR TEAM. IF YOU SHARE ANY DATA YOU HAVE ON THIS PERSON WHO INTERESTS YOU, I'LL BE HAPPY TO LOOK HIM UP AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE SO FAR.
I'LL ADMIT THESE ARE FAR FROM COMPLETE, BUT I'VE BURNED A SET OF DOSSIER CARDS FOR THE CURRENT POOL OF APPLICANTS...
FLIP
DO YOU ALSO HAVE DOSSIER CARDS? CARDS FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL APPLICANT?
HA HA... WHY? SOMEONE HERE YOU HAVE A PARTICULAR INTEREST IN?
SHUHF
GAARA, FROM SUNAGAKURE-- HIDE-IN-SAND-- AND ROCK LEE, FROM KONOHA.
YOU KNOW THEIR NAMES? NO SWEAT, THEN!
LET ME SEE THEM.
I DON'T HAVE A CLUE WHAT THIS GUY'S TALKING ABOUT... BUT I'LL PLAY ALONG.
FLIP

HE WAS CONSIDERED A STANDOUT AMONG LAST YEAR'S *GENIN*... BUT HE DIDN'T APPLY FOR THE *CHÛNIN* EXAM.

HE'S A FRST-TIMER, LIKE YOU THREE. HIS TEAMMATES ARE NAMED HYUGA NEJI AND TENTEN.

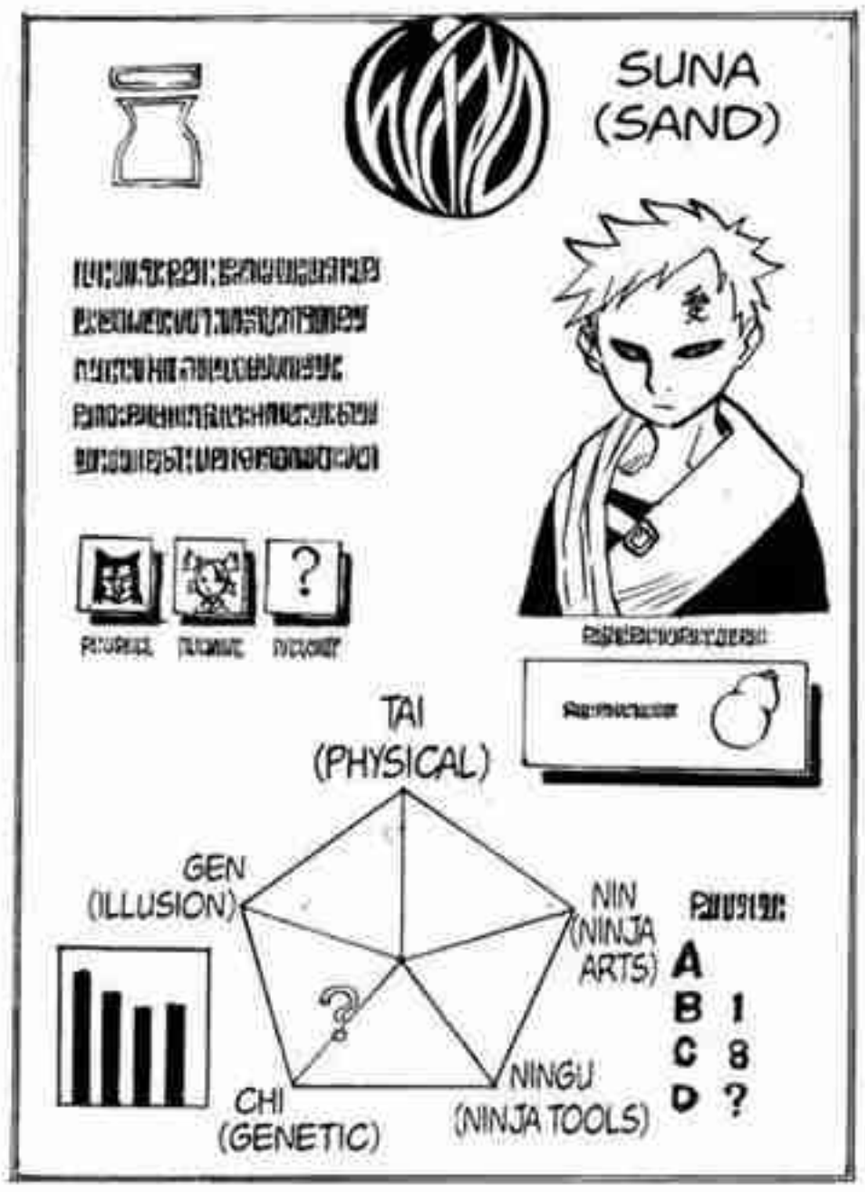
FIRST UP IS ROCK LEE.

HE'S A YEAR OLDER THAN YOU THREE. MISSIONS TO DATE: 20 D-RANKED, 11 C-RANKED. HIS TEAM'S MENTOR IS MIGHT GUY...

AND HIS *TAIJUTSU* PHYSICAL SKILLS HAVE GROWN EXPONENTIALLY THIS PAST YEAR. HE HAS NO OTHER TALENTS WORTH MENTIONING.

SINCE HE'S FROM WAY OUT IN THE DESERT, I HAVE LESS ON HIM... BUT IT'S INTERESTING. HE'S COME BACK FROM EVERY MISSION COMPLETELY UNSCATHED.

WITHOUT A SCRATCH...



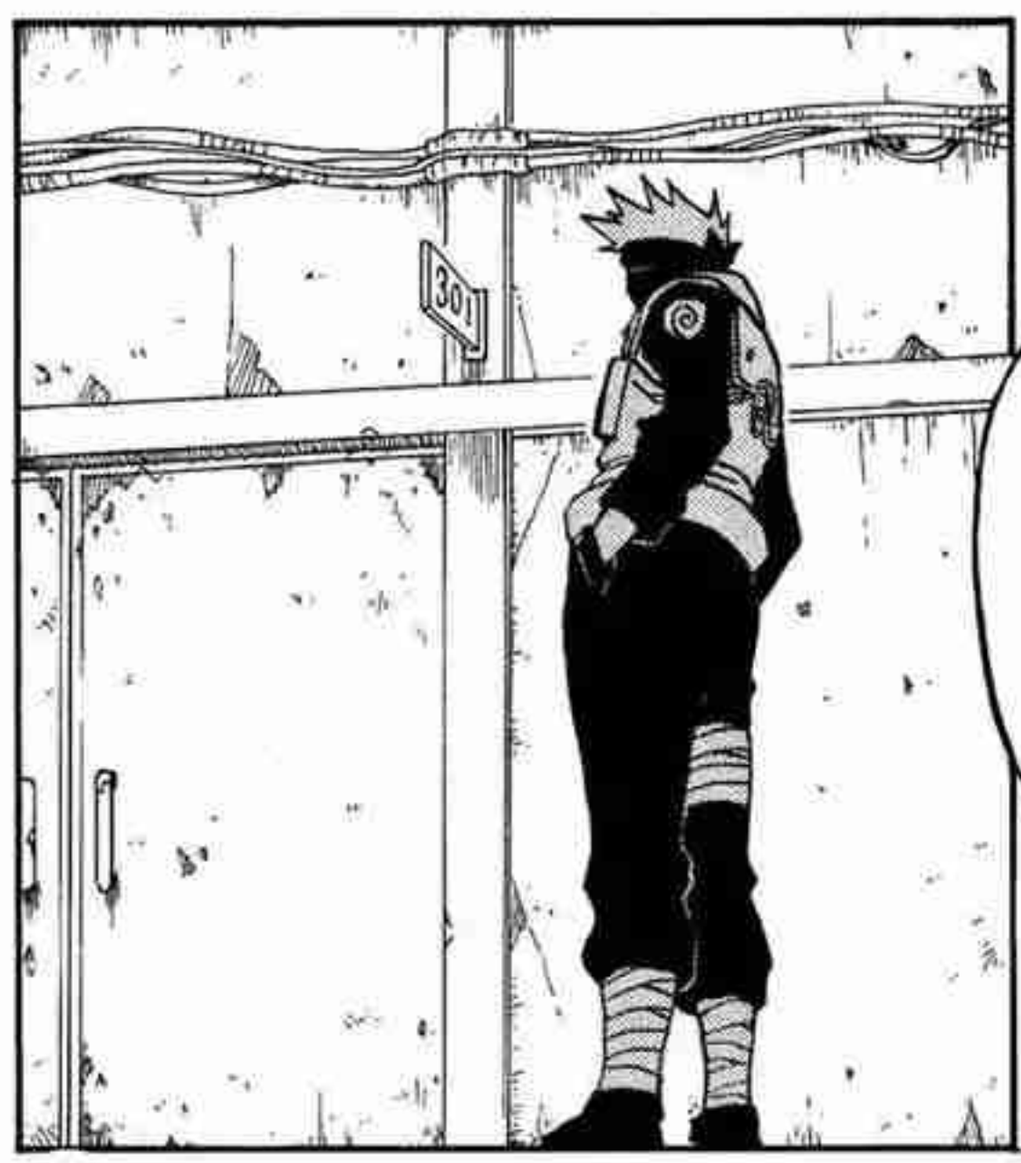

NEXT IS GAARA OF THE SAND... DESERT COUNTRY...

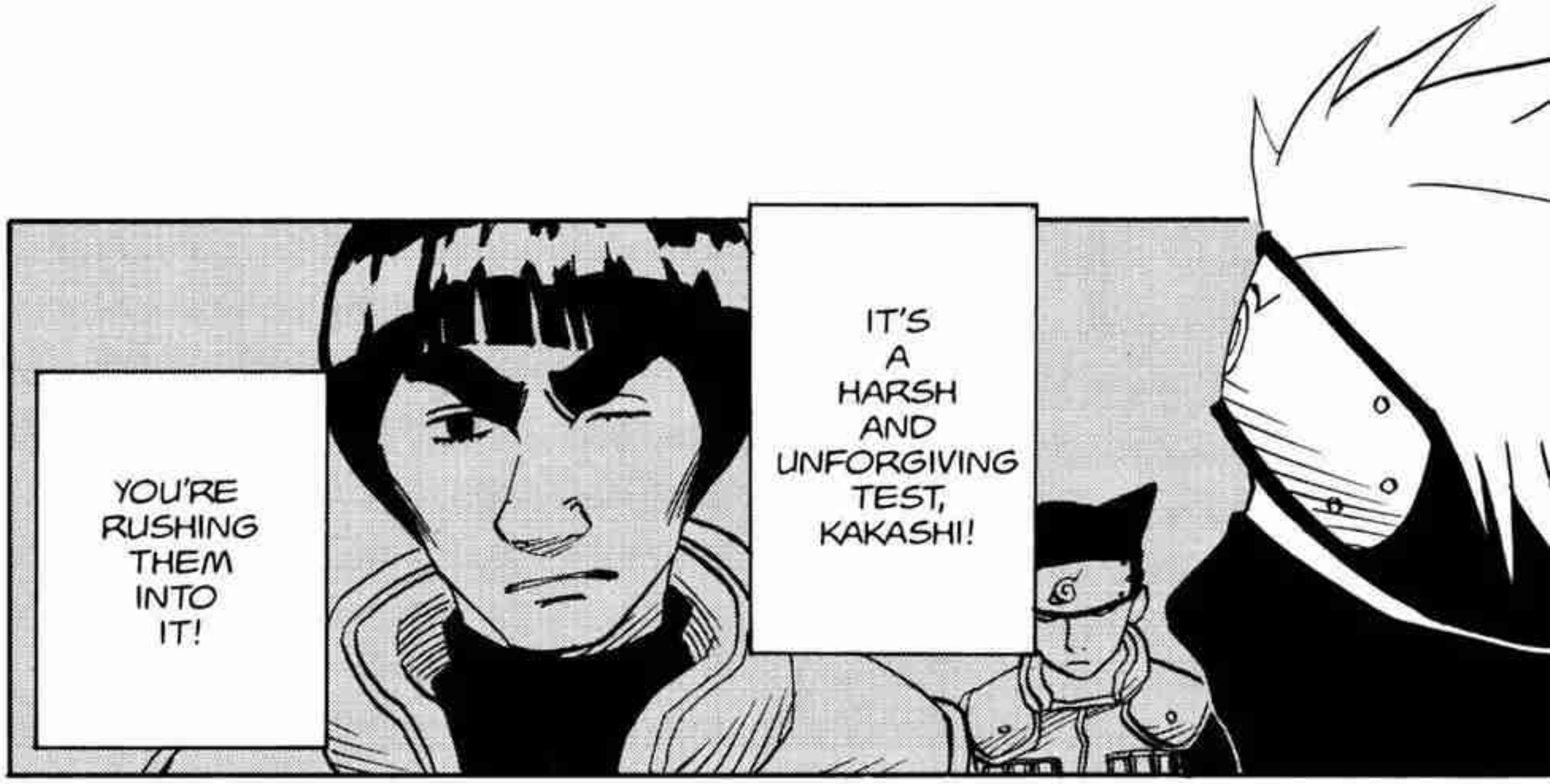
EIGHT C-RANKED MISSIONS... ONE B. WOW! NOT MANY ROOKIE SHINOBI GET B-RANKED ASSIGNMENTS!

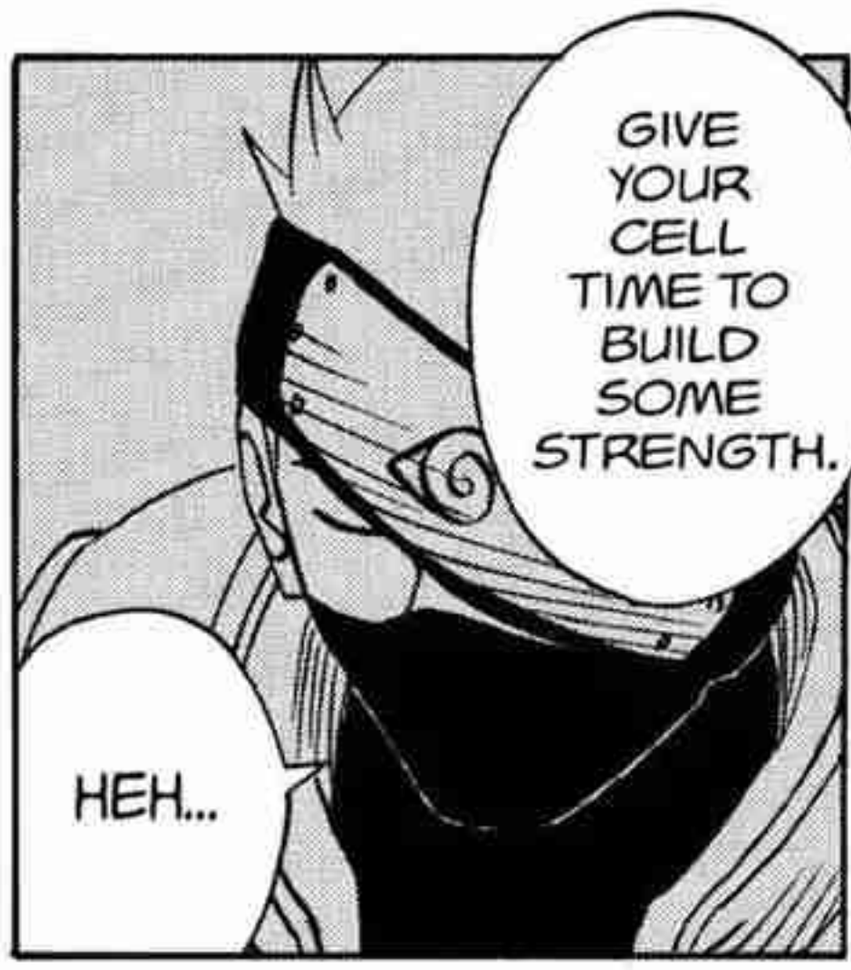
EVERY OTHER COMPETING VILLAGE IS WELL-RESPECTED, HOME TO SOME FORMIDABLY POWERFUL SHINOBI...

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT OTO, THE VILLAGE HIDDEN IN SOUND. IT'S PART OF A NEW, SMALL NATION, SO INTELLIGENCE ON IT IS LACKING.

KONOHA, SUNA, AME, KUSA, TAKI, OTO... THIS YEAR, EVERY HIDDEN VILLAGE HAS SENT OUTSTANDING JUNIOR-LEVEL *GENIN* HERE TO COMPETE.

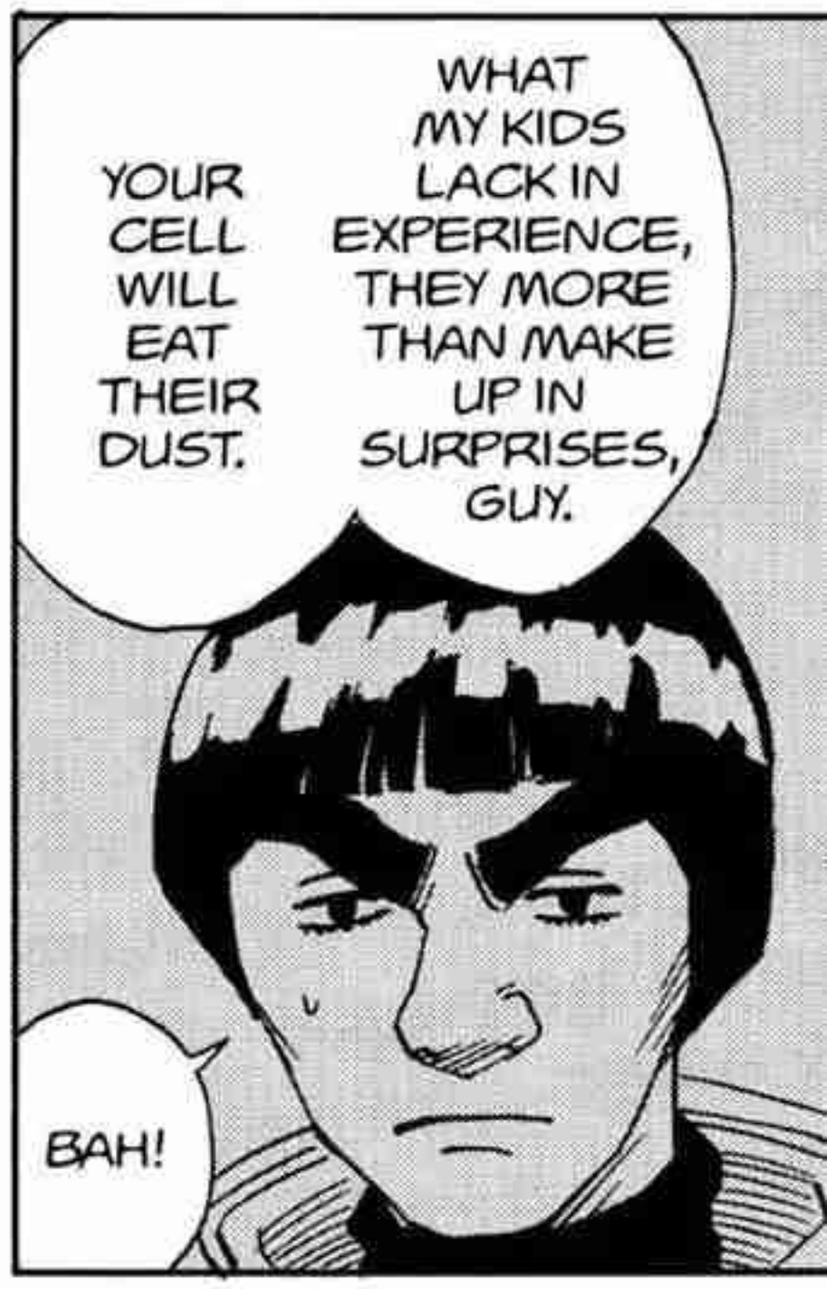



YOU'RE RUSHING THEM INTO IT!
IT'S A HARSH AND UNFORGIVING TEST, KAKASHI!


GIVE YOUR CELL TIME TO BUILD SOME STRENGTH.
HEH...

IRUKA WAS RIGHT!
MY KIDS ARE THE BEST, BUT I STILL GAVE THEM A YEAR TO MATURE BEFORE LETTING THEM APPLY.


ENOUGH OF THIS.
FOR OUR NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS, I'LL CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENIN CANDIDATES WHO HAVE PASSED THEIR FIRST YEAR.


YOUR CELL WILL EAT THEIR DUST.
WHAT MY KIDS LACK IN EXPERIENCE, THEY MORE THAN MAKE UP IN SURPRISES, GUY.
BAH!

HAH! OVER ONE HURDLE...

301
... BUT EVEN THEY MUST BE A LITTLE UNEASY, WONDERING WHAT COMES NEXT.
THOSE THREE ARE UTTERLY FEARLESS...
EVEN SO....

SHIVER
LOOKS LIKE EVEN OUR TEAM'S OVERCONFIDENT BUTTHEAD HAS THE SHAKES.

SHIVER
SHIVER

!

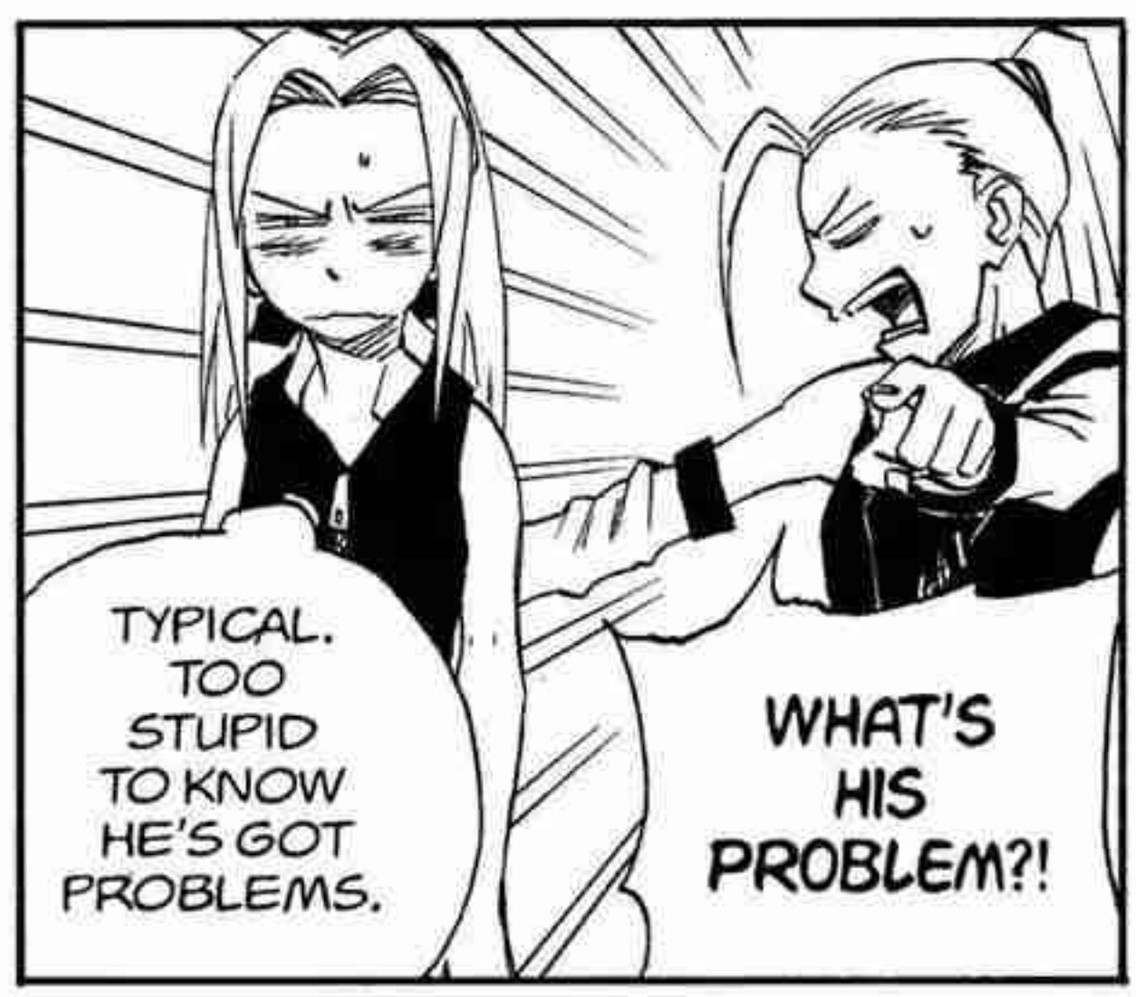
IT'S ALL RIGHT, NARUTO. NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
STILL, IT'S NOT LIKE NARUTO. MAYBE IF I GIVE HIM A LITTLE PEP TALK...

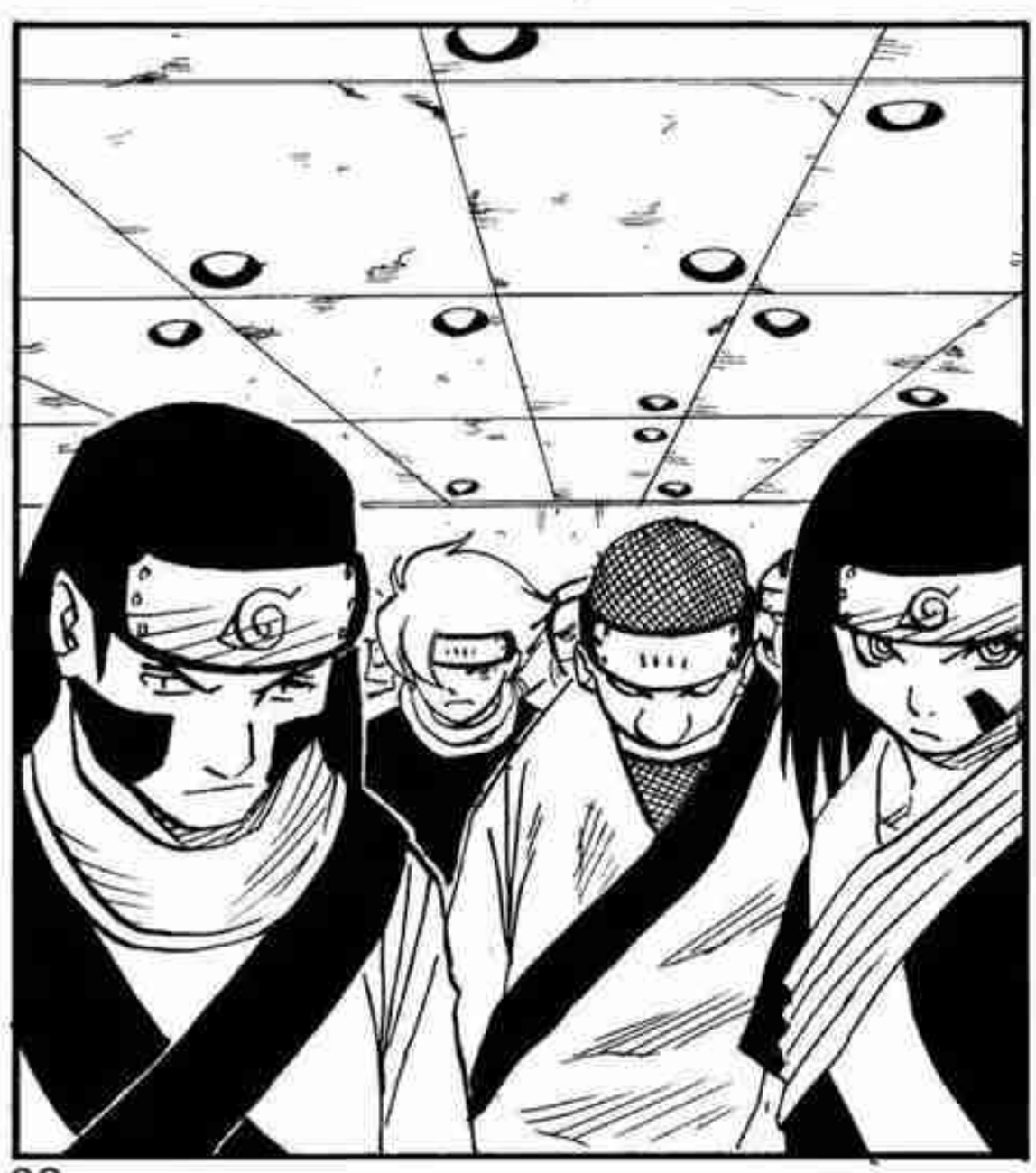
BUT WE THREE ARETHE YOUNGEST... ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS!
AND WHO CAN BLAME HIM? WE'RE ALL GENIN HERE...

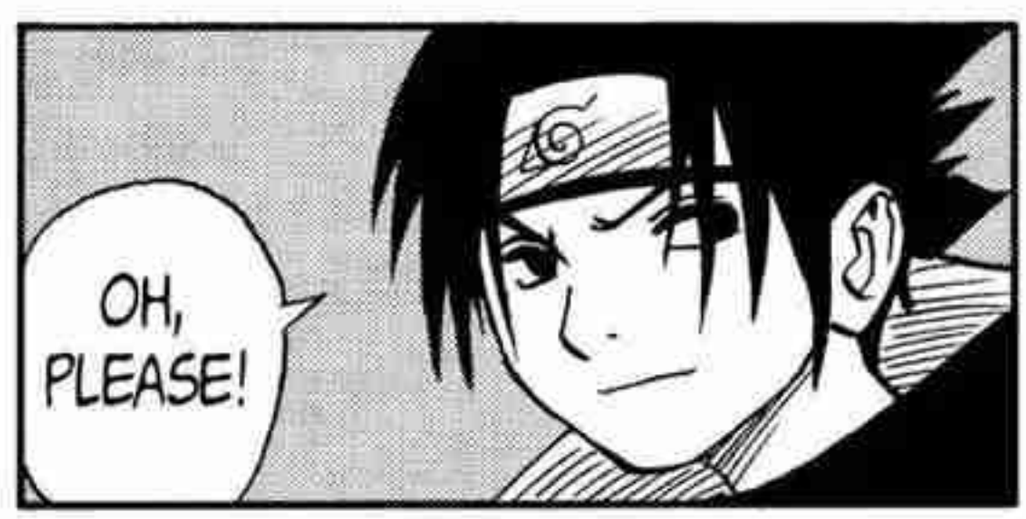
AND NONE OF YOU ARE GONNA BEAT ME!!!!
MY NAME IS UZUMAKI NARUTO!!
ONNNG
!!

YOU GOT THAT?
...

YEAH!
THAT FELT GREAT!

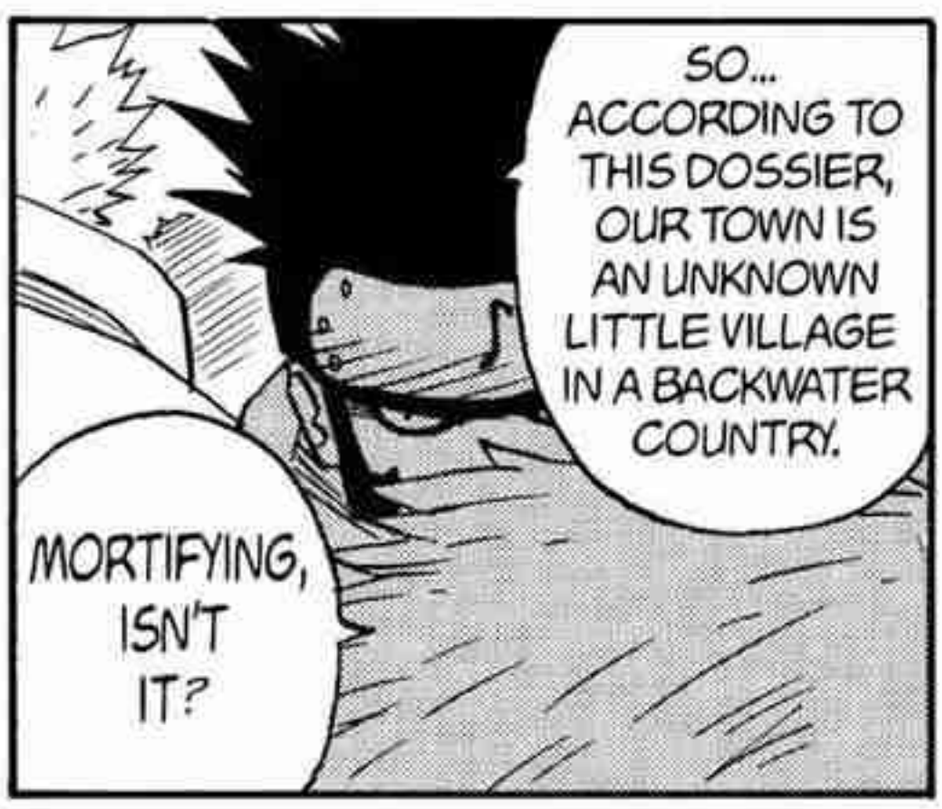

TYPICAL. TOO STUPID TO KNOW HE'S GOT PROBLEMS.
WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM?!




OH, PLEASE!

DIDN'T WE MEET HIM EARLIER?

...

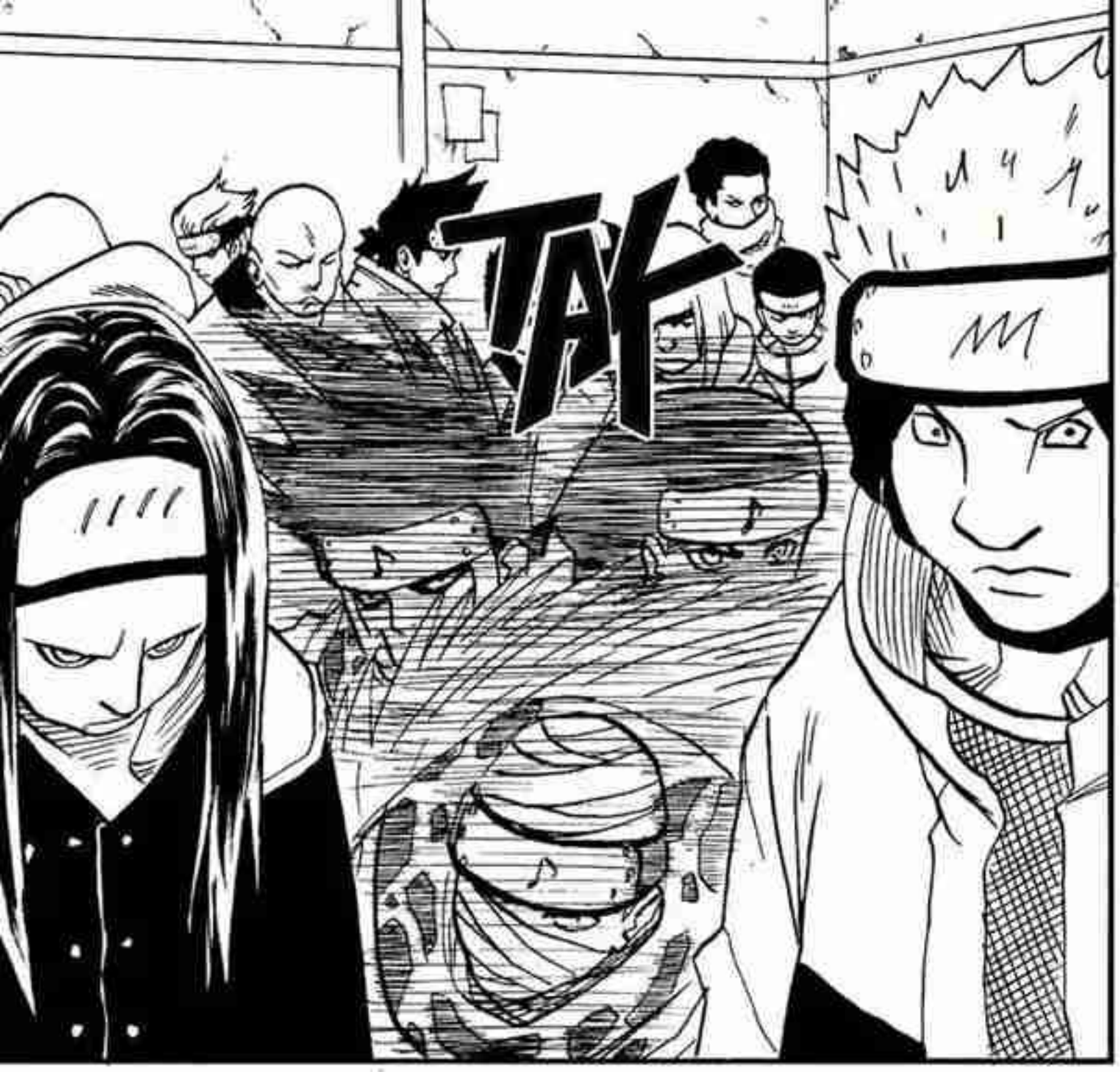


# 40: The First Test

THAT IDIOT TURNED A ROOM FULL OF STRANGERS INTO A ROOM FULL OF ENEMIES WITH JUST ONE SENTENCE.

"AND NONE OF YOU ARE GONNA BEAT ME!" THE NERVE OF THAT KID!

LITTLE SHOW-OFF!


TAK

OH, WELL...

HOP

GOK

SWOOP

CRAB
CRAB
TAP

FIN
!!
SHING
SHING
!!!
SKF
THOK
THOK
SHF
SHF
SHF
FWIP

!!
THEY'RE FROM SOUND...
!!

HE DODGED IT!

KRAK
!

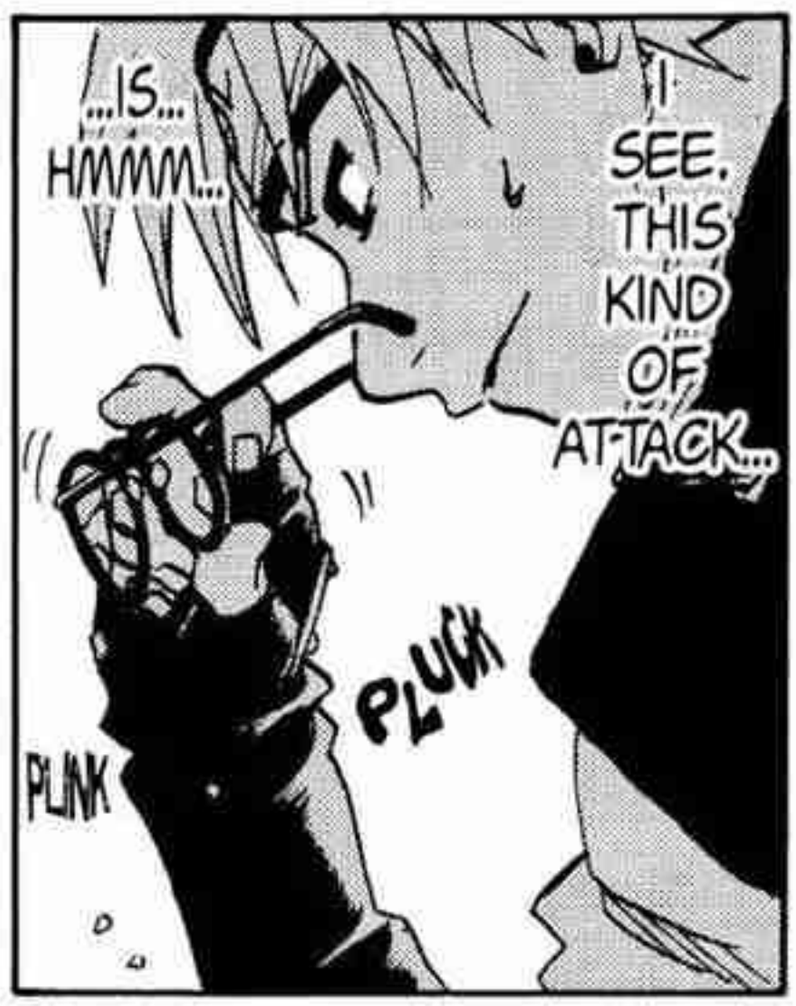
SO QUICKLY I BARELY SAW HIM MOVE.

!

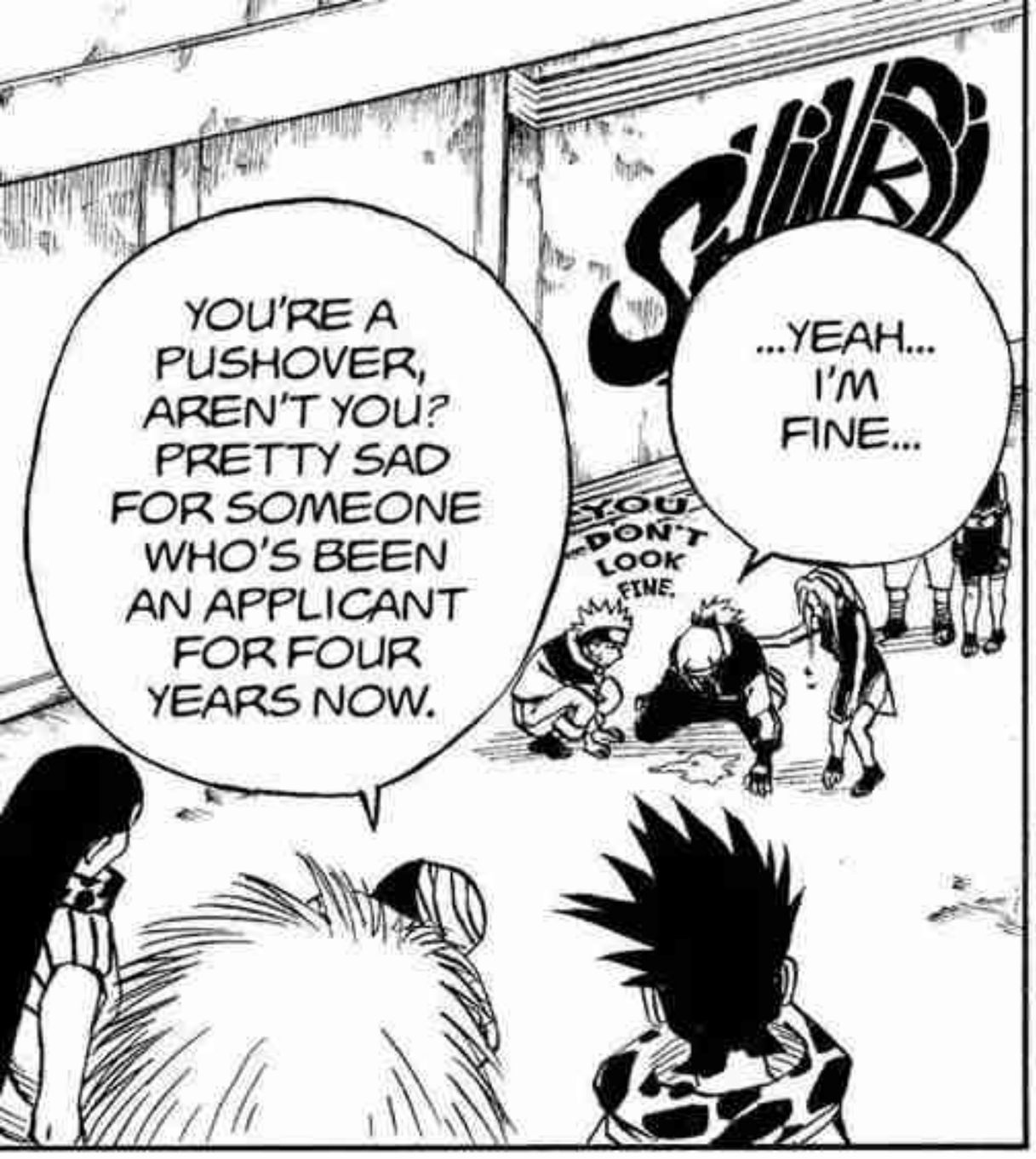
PLINK
PLINK

?!
UNDER

HIS NOSE PROBABLY GOT GRAZED...
SERVES HIM RIGHT FOR ACTING ALL SUPERIOR.
WHAT'S GOING ON? HE DODGED THE BLOW, BUT SOMETHING BROKE HIS GLASSES!


...IS... HMMM...
I SEE. THIS KIND OF ATTACK...
PLUCK
PLINK

NOTE: ABUMI'S SHIRT SAYS "DEATH."

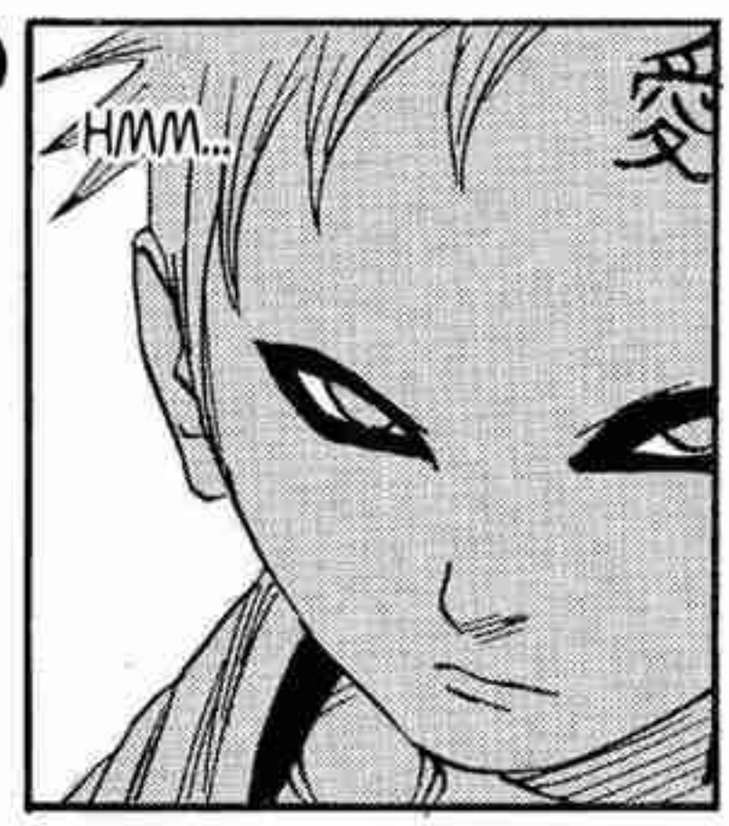

YOU'RE A PUSHOVER, AREN'T YOU? PRETTY SAD FOR SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN AN APPLICANT FOR FOUR YEARS NOW.
...YEAH... I'M FINE...
YOU DON'T LOOK FINE.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
KABUTO!! HEY, BRO!

WHY DID HE VOMIT?
I KNOW KABUTO DUCKED THAT BLOW... SO WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
LEE, WHAT DID THAT LOOK LIKE TO YOU?
KABUTO SAW THROUGH THE ATTACK... SO THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING ELSE TO IT, SOME TRICK THEY USED TO MAKE HIM SICK.

BETTER ADD THIS TO YOUR CARDS. THE THREE APPLICANTS FROM HIDING-IN-SOUND WILL ALL MAKE CHUNIN THIS YEAR!

WHAAA?!
WOULD EVERYBODY PLEASE JUST SHUT UP?!


HMM...

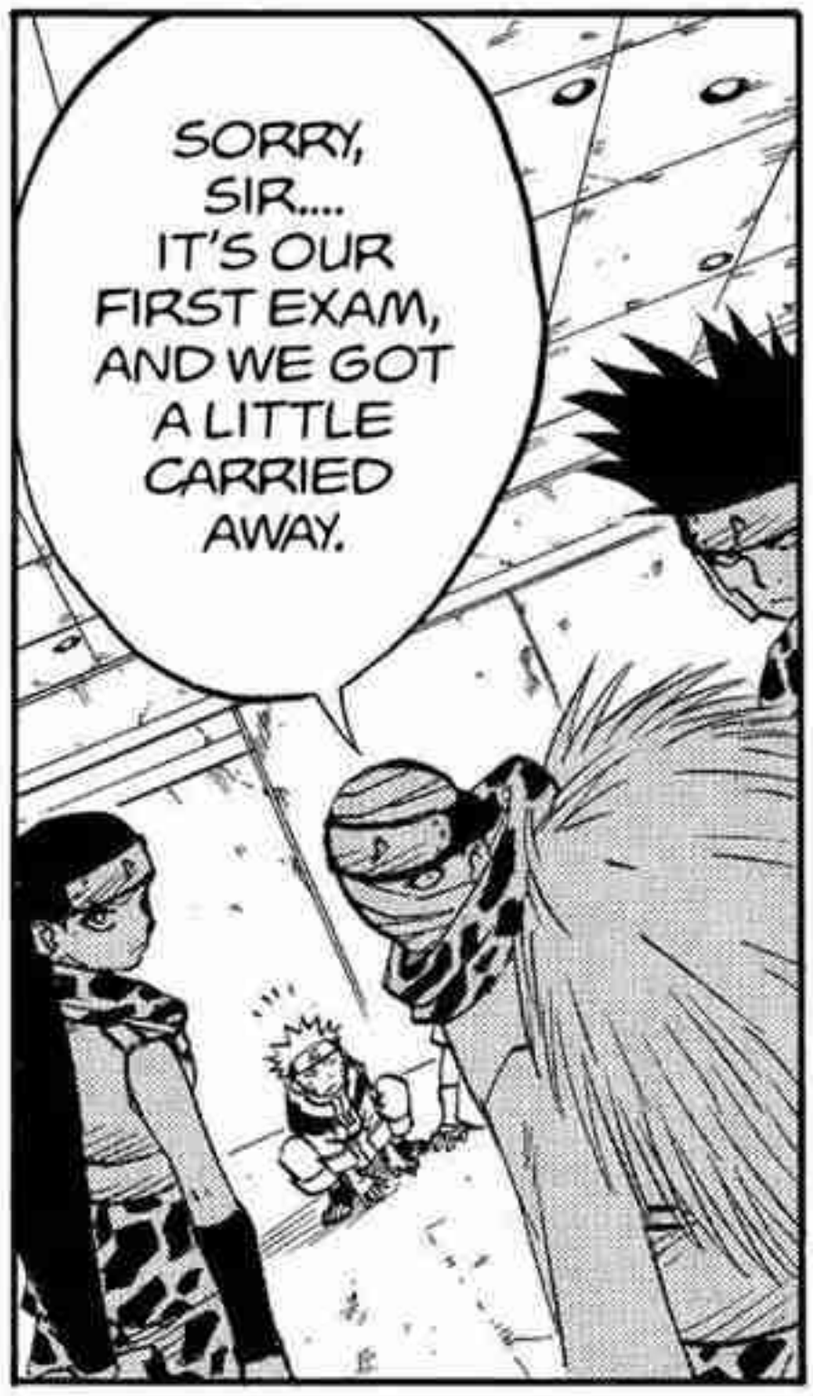
MY NAME IS MORINO IBIKI. I'M THE PROCTOR AND CHIEF EXAMINER FOR THE FIRST PART OF THE EXAM.

SORRY TO HAVE KEPT YOU WAITING.









AND EVEN IF THAT PERMISSION IS GRANTED, ANYTHING THAT ENDANGERS ANOTHER APPLICANT'S LIFE IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

FROM THIS POINT FORWARD, THERE WILL BE NO MORE FIGHTING WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PERMISSION OF THE EXAMINING OFFICER...

THEN IT'S HIGH TIME SOMEONE LAID DOWN A FEW GROUND RULES.

IS THAT SO?

GOT THAT?

ANY OF YOU LITTLE PIGLETS WHO BREAK THAT RULE ARE OUT. DISQUALIFIED. NO SECOND CHANCES.

SNEER

SO THIS IS A TEST FOR LITTLE GIRLY MEN?

...

TURN IN YOUR WRITTEN APPLICATIONS, TAKE ONE OF THESE SEATING ASSIGNMENT CARDS...

AS YOU WISH. THE FIRST PART OF THE SELECTION EXAM IS ABOUT TO COMMENCE.

WHEN EVERYONE'S SEATED, WE'LL PASS OUT THE WRITTEN PART OF THE TEST.

1

FLIP!

... AND REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE SEAT INDICATED.

A-A PAPER TEST?!

HUNH?

?

?

NOW WHAT DO I DO?
AW, MAN-- WE'RE SPREAD OUT ALL OVER THE ROOM.
THIS MUST BE NARUTO'S WORST NIGHTMARE. HE LOOKS ABSOLUTELY CRUSHED!
NARUTO...
53
53
NOW LISTEN UP.
PAPERS FACE DOWN UNTIL I GIVE THE SIGNAL.
OH! I DIDN'T EVEN SEE YOU, HINATA.
L-LET'S DO OUR BEST!
THIS CHICK'S A REGULAR INVISIBLE GIRL!
AND NO QUESTIONS?! WHY NOT?
RULES?
TAP
TAP
I'LL WRITE THEM ON THE BLACKBOARD AND EXPLAIN THEM ALL, BUT I'M NOT TAKING QUESTIONS, SO LISTEN CAREFULLY. I WILL SAY THIS ONLY ONCE.
THERE ARE A FEW BIG RULES THAT PERTAIN TO THIS FIRST TEST.

THE TEST HAS TEN QUESTIONS, EACH WORTH ONE POINT.

FOR EACH QUESTION YOU GET WRONG, WE SUBTRACT A POINT FROM YOU.

SKRITCH

SKRITCH

RULE NUMBER ONE! EACH ONE OF YOU STARTS OUT HERE WITH TEN POINTS.

BUT IF, FOR EXAMPLE, YOU ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS INCORRECTLY, WE TAKE YOUR TEN POINTS...

...SUBTRACT ONE POINT FOR EVERY WRONG ANSWER... AND YOUR TOTAL DROPS DOWN TO SEVEN.

TOTAL POINTS

EXAMPLE 1.
PERFECT SCORE
TOTAL POINTS
REMAIN AT 10

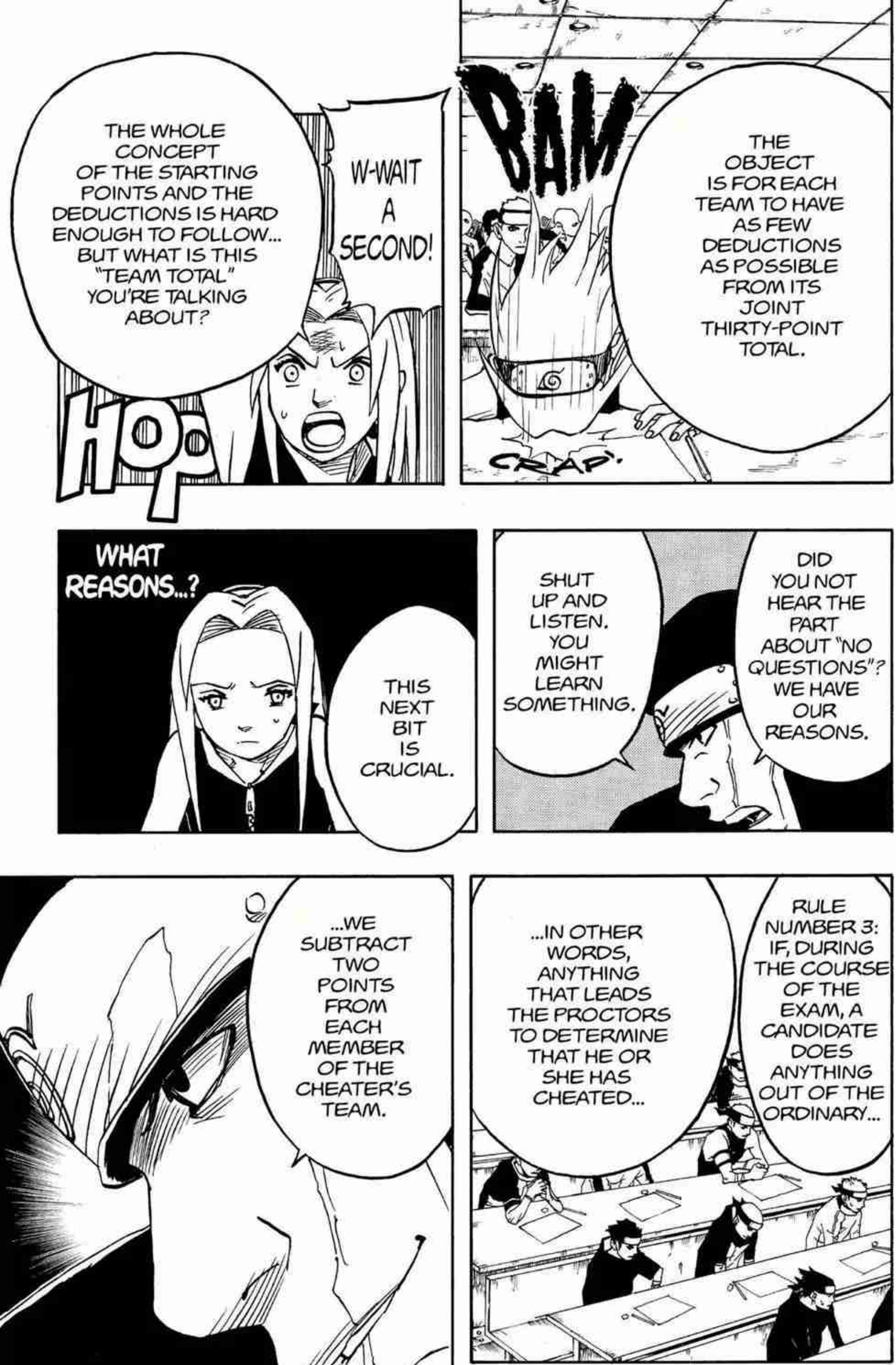
EXAMPLE 2.
3 ANSWERS WRONG
TOTAL POINTS
ARE REDUCED TO 7 POINTS

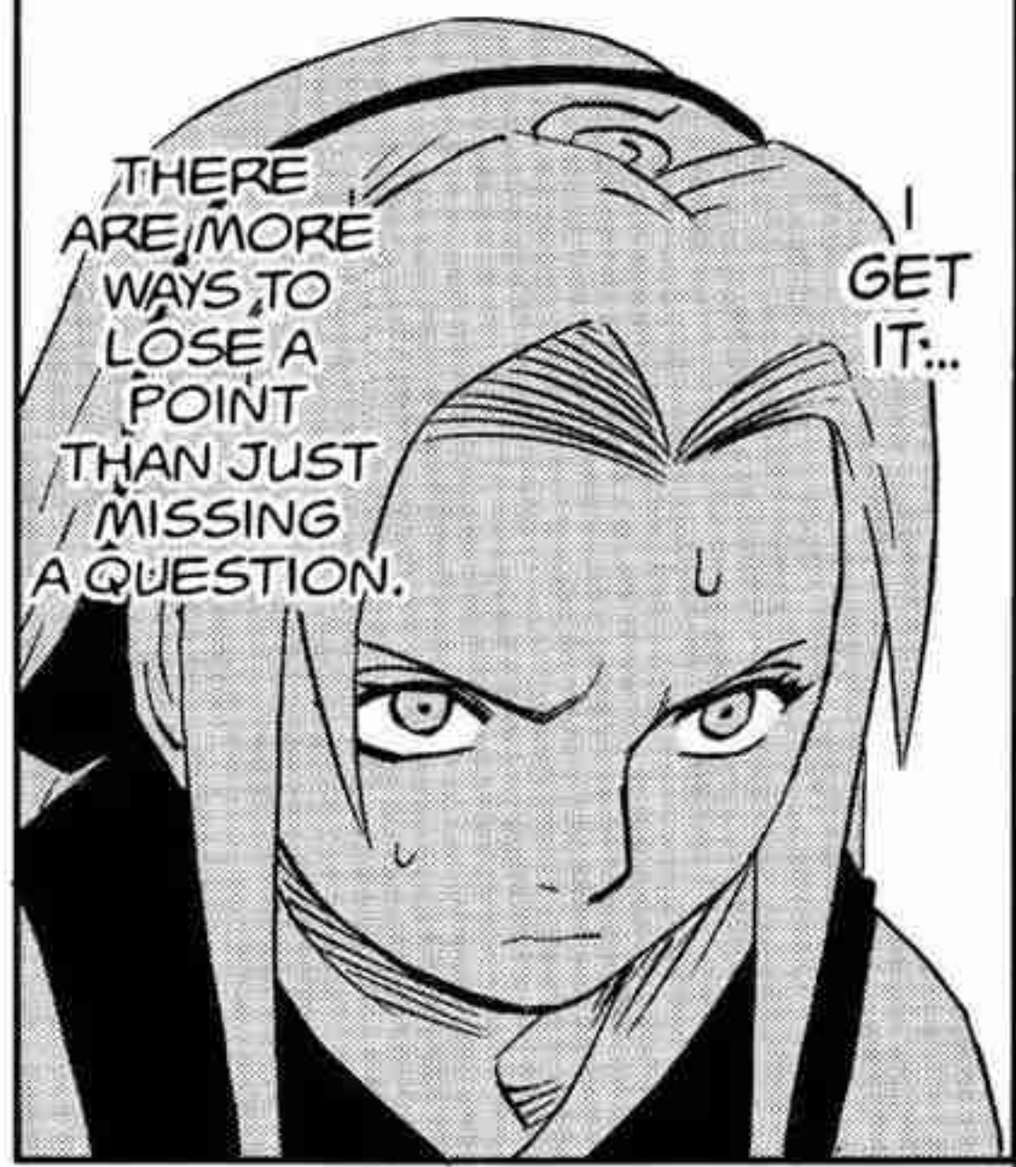
GET ALL TEN RIGHT, AND YOU RETAIN THE TEN POINTS YOU HAVE.

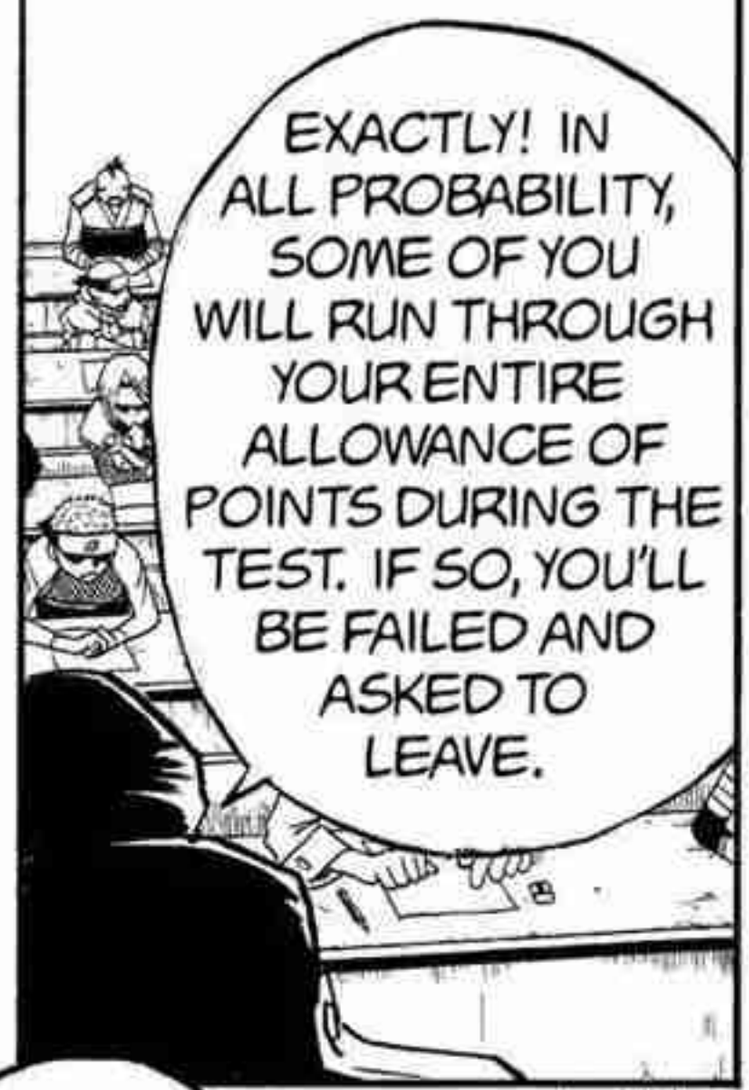
PASSING OR FAILING WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE SUM OF THE POINTS HELD BY ALL THREE MEMBERS OF EACH CELL.

RULE NUMBER 2... THIS WRITTEN TEST IS STILL A TEAM EVENT.

IN OTHER WORDS, IF I GET ALL TEN QUESTIONS WRONG, I'LL END UP WITH NO POINTS AT ALL!


THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF THE STARTING POINTS AND THE DEDUCTIONS IS HARD ENOUGH TO FOLLOW... BUT WHAT IS THIS "TEAM TOTAL" YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT?
HOP
W-WAIT A SECOND!
BAM
THE OBJECT IS FOR EACH TEAM TO HAVE AS FEW DEDUCTIONS AS POSSIBLE FROM ITS JOINT THIRTY-POINT TOTAL.
CRAP!
WHAT REASONS...?
THIS NEXT BIT IS CRUCIAL.
SHUT UP AND LISTEN. YOU MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING.
DID YOU NOT HEAR THE PART ABOUT "NO QUESTIONS"? WE HAVE OUR REASONS.
...WE SUBTRACT TWO POINTS FROM EACH MEMBER OF THE CHEATER'S TEAM.
...IN OTHER WORDS, ANYTHING THAT LEADS THE PROCTORS TO DETERMINE THAT HE OR SHE HAS CHEATED...
RULE NUMBER 3: IF, DURING THE COURSE OF THE EXAM, A CANDIDATE DOES ANYTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY...

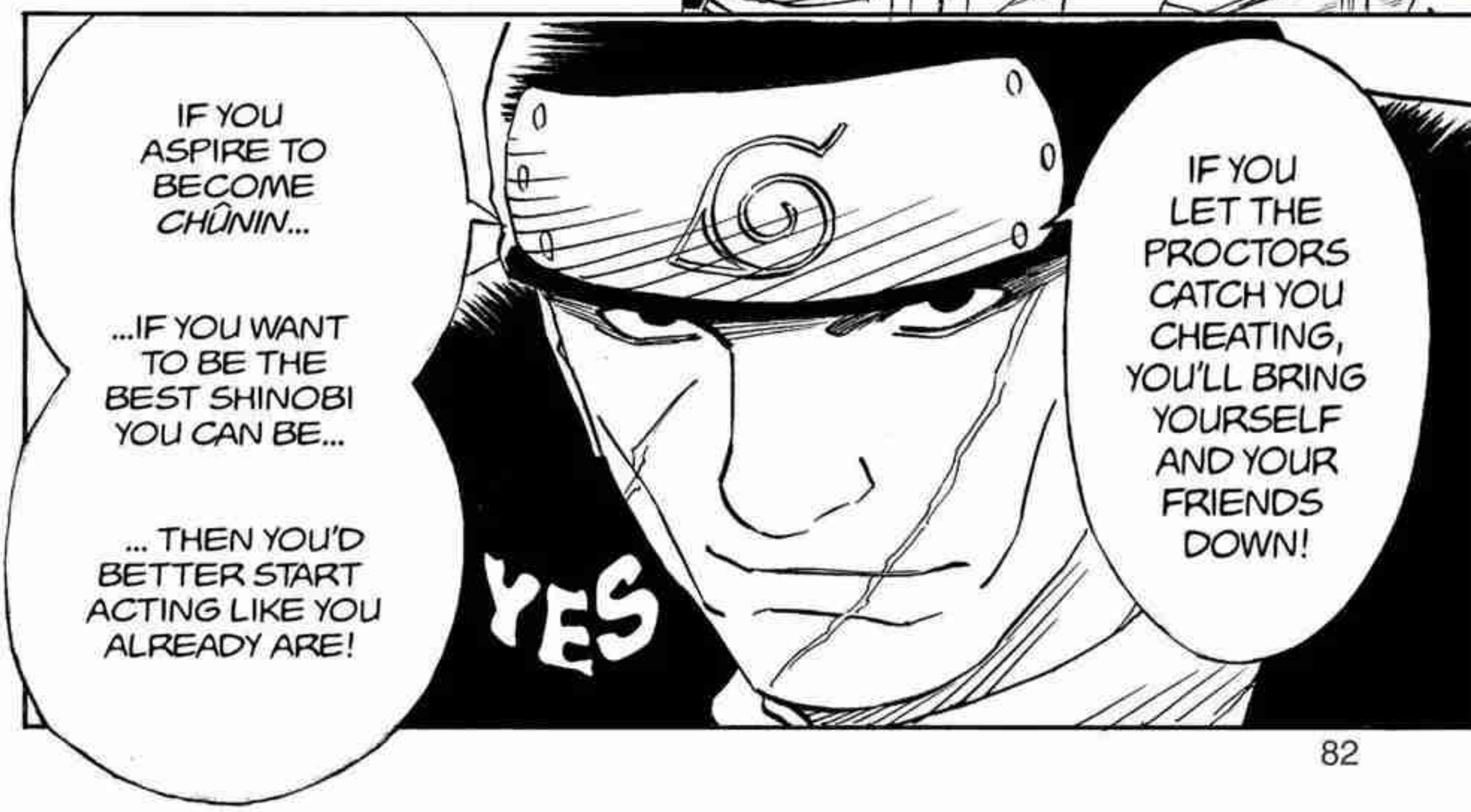

THERE ARE MORE WAYS TO LOSE A POINT THAN JUST MISSING A QUESTION.
I GET IT...

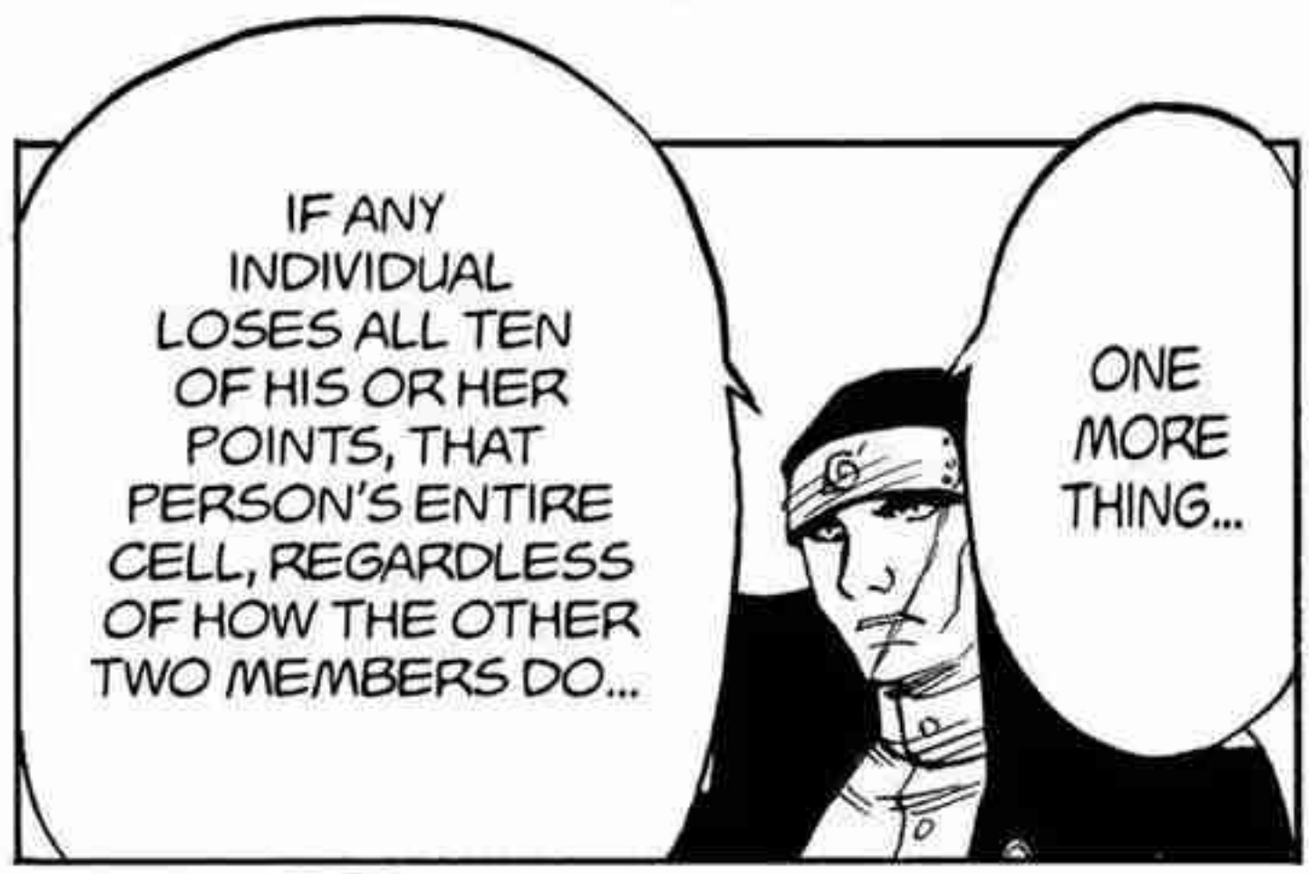

EXACTLY! IN ALL PROBABILITY, SOME OF YOU WILL RUN THROUGH YOUR ENTIRE ALLOWANCE OF POINTS DURING THE TEST. IF SO, YOU'LL BE FAILED AND ASKED TO LEAVE.

OH!

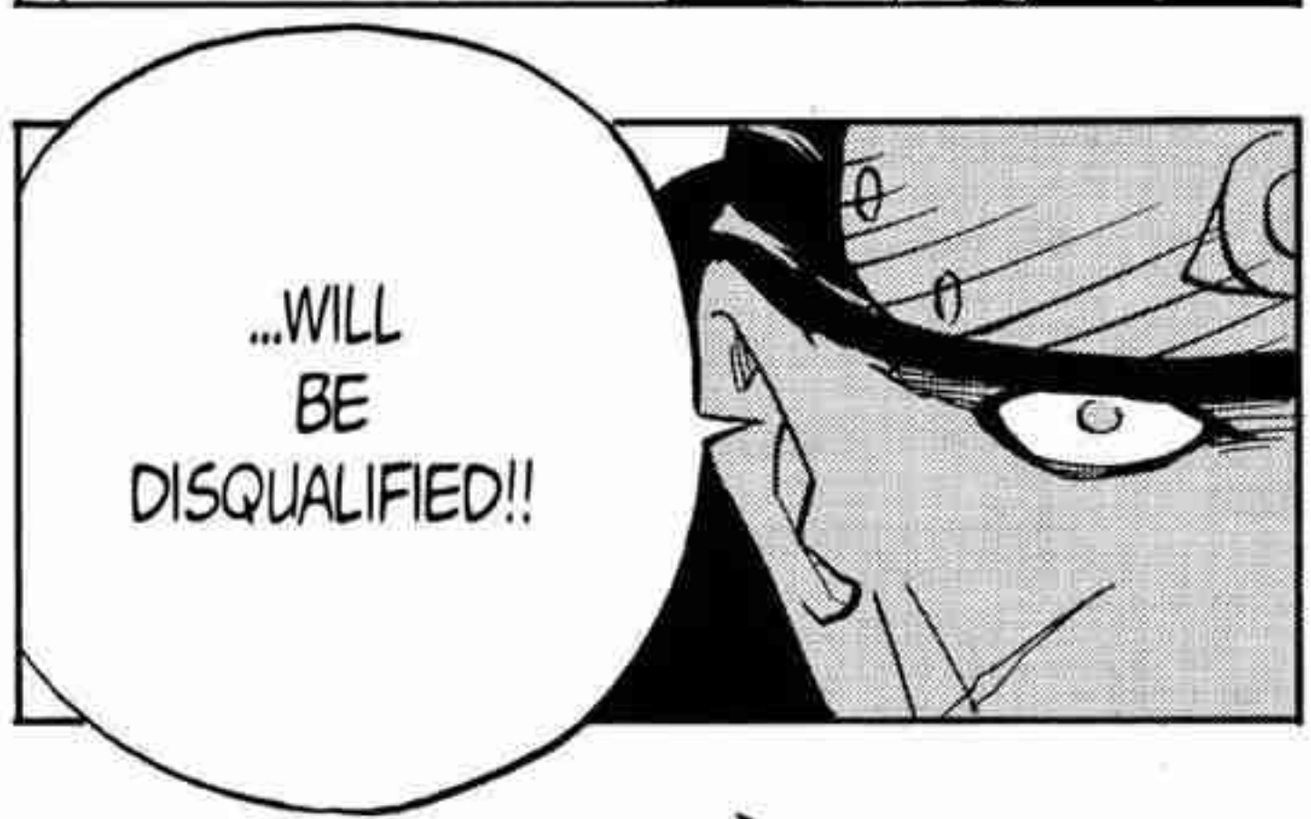
SHIPE!

I'LL BE LOOKING OVER YOUR SHOULDERS WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT.


IF YOU ASPIRE TO BECOME CHÛNIN...
...IF YOU WANT TO BE THE BEST SHINOBI YOU CAN BE...
... THEN YOU'D BETTER START ACTING LIKE YOU ALREADY ARE!
YES
IF YOU LET THE PROCTORS CATCH YOU CHEATING, YOU'LL BRING YOURSELF AND YOUR FRIENDS DOWN!


IF ANY INDIVIDUAL LOSES ALL TEN OF HIS OR HER POINTS, THAT PERSON'S ENTIRE CELL, REGARDLESS OF HOW THE OTHER TWO MEMBERS DO...
ONE MORE THING...

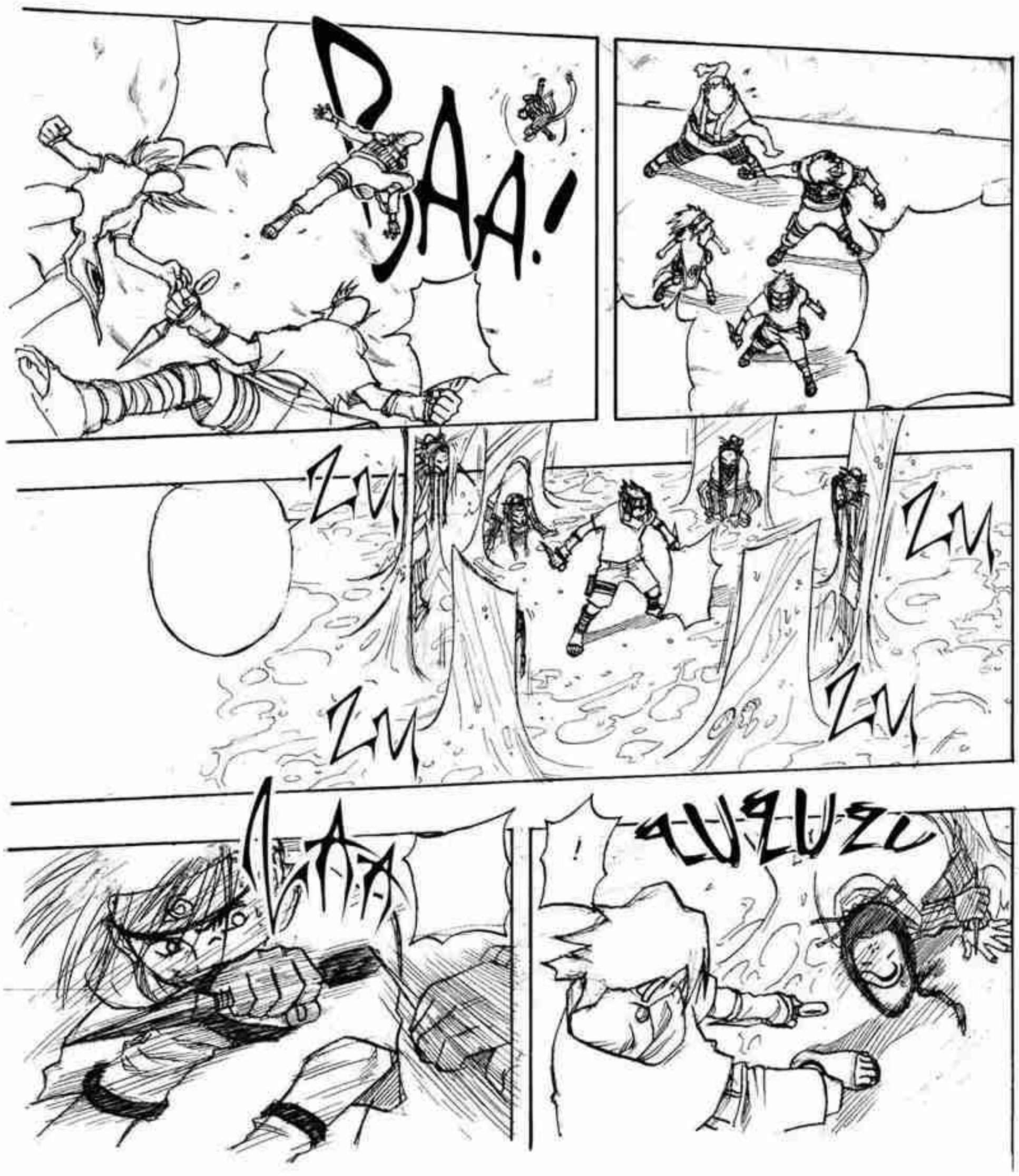
GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF, SAKURA. IT'S TOO BAD ABOUT NARUTO, BUT SASUKE AND I SHOULD BE ABLE TO RETAIN ENOUGH POINTS FOR ALL THREE OF US...
...EVEN IF NARUTO GETS EVERY SINGLE ANSWER WRONG!


...WILL BE DISQUALIFIED!!

WHAT?!

!!
WHAT?!

I CAN FEEL THEM FROM HERE... BOTH WANTING TO KILL ME ALREADY!
...




## KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S "I ONLY SHOW YOU THESE THINGS SO YOU'LL UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH I LOVE MANGA" REJECTS CORNER...

THE MANGA PAGE ABOVE IS A REJECTED PAGE FROM NARUTO. THIS PAGE HAD BEEN THUMBNAILED, BROKEN DOWN IN PENCIL, AND THEN FINISHED IN INK... BUT I STILL REDREW IT, BECAUSE I JUST DIDN'T FEEL IT WAS UP TO SNUFF. THE LAYOUT WAS TOO STATIC, AND THE PANELS WERE TOO SMALL FOR THE KIND OF DYNAMIC, IMPORTANT ACTION THIS SEQUENCE CALLED FOR. TRYING TO MAINTAIN A WEEKLY PUBLISHING SCHEDULE LEAVES ME VERY LITTLE TIME FOR THE LUXURY OF FUSSING OVER ART, SO IT'S PRETTY RARE TO REDO ANYTHING ONCE IT'S DOWN ON PAPER... BUT IF SOMETHING FEELS SO WRONG THAT I KNOW IT NEEDS FIXING, THEN I COMMIT TO THE CHANGE, NO MATTER HOW SET IN STONE I THINK MY STORY OUTLINE AND THUMBNAIL DRAWINGS ARE, AND NO MATTER HOW FAR ALONG I'VE GOTTEN IN THE FINISHED ART. IF SOMETHING REALLY FEELS WRONG, I'VE GOT TO RESPECT MY OWN CREATIVE GUT INSTINCTS. YOU KNOW... SEEING IT IN WRITING... I THINK I MAY HAVE JUST FIGURED OUT WHY I SOMETIMES HAVE TROUBLE MEETING DEADLINES!

THE *CHÛNIN* JOURNEYMAN NINJA SELECTION EXAM
RULES FOR PART ONE

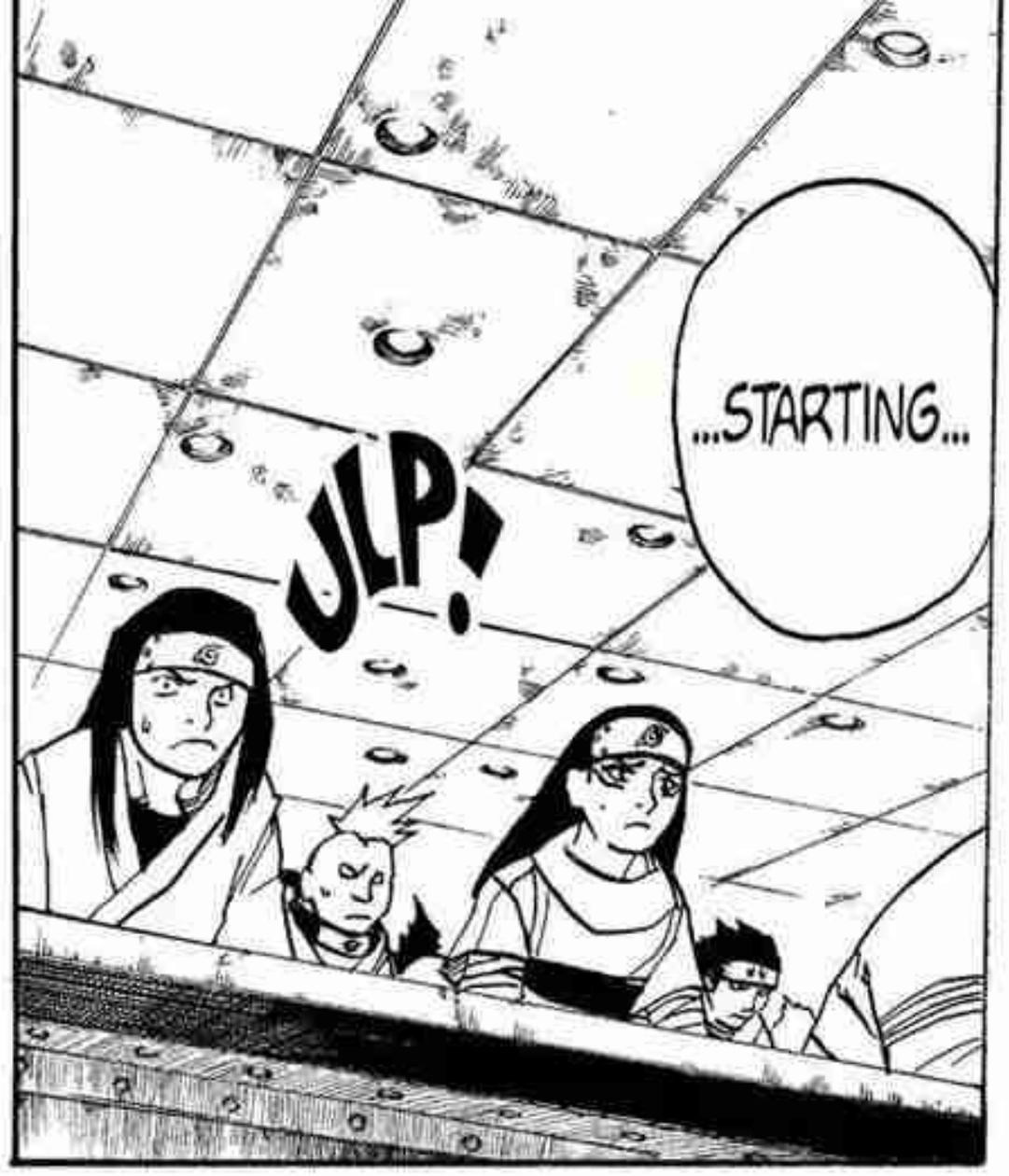
(1) EACH APPLICANT BEGINS WITH A PERFECT SCORE OF TEN POINTS. THERE ARE TEN QUESTIONS WORTH ONE POINT APIECE. A POINT IS SUBTRACTED FOR EVERY INCORRECT ANSWER. THE GRADING SYSTEM IS ENTIRELY BASED ON A PRINCIPLE OF PENALIZATION.

(2) THE EXAM IS A TEAM EVENT. WHAT MATTERS IS HOW CLOSE EACH THREE-NINJA CELL CAN COME TO RETAINING ITS INITIAL THIRTY POINTS.

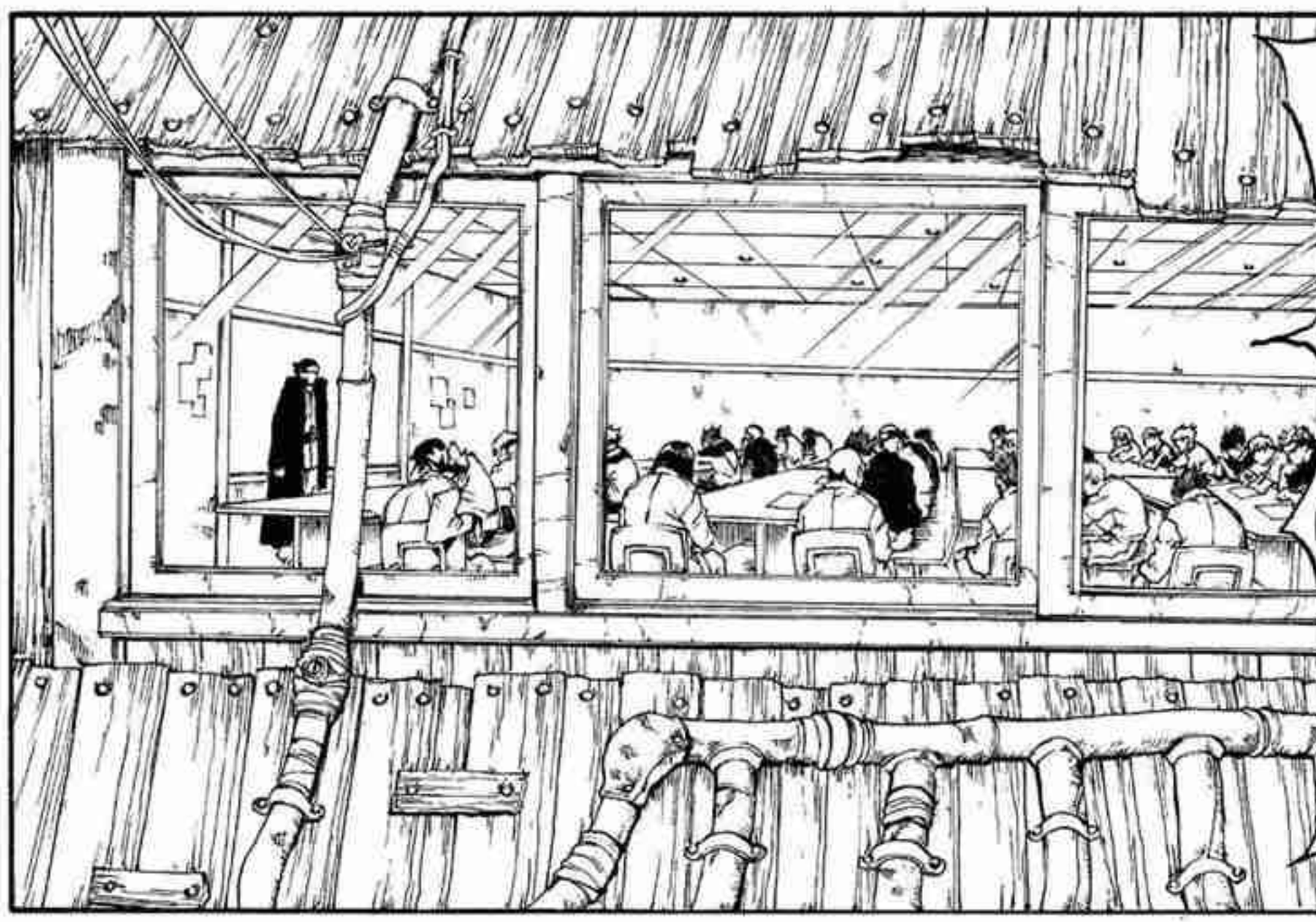
(3) ANYONE CAUGHT ATTEMPTING TO CHEAT OR AIDING AND ABETTING A CHEATER WILL LOSE TWO POINTS FOR EACH OFFENSE.

(4) ANYONE WHO HAS NO POINTS LEFT AT THE TEST'S END--WHETHER DUE TO BEING CAUGHT CHEATING OR TO AN INABILITY TO ANSWER ANY OF THE QUESTIONS CORRECTLY--WILL AUTOMATICALLY FAIL; IF A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL FAILS, THE REMAINING TWO MEMBERS OF THAT PERSON'S CELL WILL BE FAILED AS WELL.

# Number 41: The Whisper of Demons


...STARTING...
JLP!

YOU HAVE ONE HOUR...


...NOW!

...TRY TO HANG ON TO AT LEAST ONE OF YOUR POINTS!!
水

THIS COULD BE A NO-WIN SITUATION...
...SAY IT ISN'T SO...
PLEASE, NARUTO...

SCRATCH
SCRATCH

HERE I AM AGAIN... FACING THE WORST KIND OF ENEMY! TEACHERS DIDN'T CALL ME THE ALL-TIME DUNCE FOR NOTHING!

I EARNED THAT NAME ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE!

HEE HEE HEE

HEH HEH HEH... THIS IS FUNNY...

HEH...

...

SHIVER SHIVER

REMAIN CALM... DON'T TRY TO DO EVERYTHING AT ONCE. LOOK EACH QUESTION SQUARE IN THE EYE. TRY TO FIND THE WEAKEST LINK... THE EASY ONE. SEPARATE IT FROM THE HERD, AND TAKE IT DOWN.

THE TRICK IS NOT TO SHOW ANY FEAR. TESTS CAN SMELL FEAR!

HMM.. HH-HH-HMMM... ♪

*CHÛNIN* JOURNEYMAN NINJA SELECTION EXAM PART ONE

QUESTION NO. 1

DECODE THE FOLLOWING CIPHER AND SUMMARIZE ITS MEANING.

THEY WANT US TO WORK OUR BUTTS OFF!

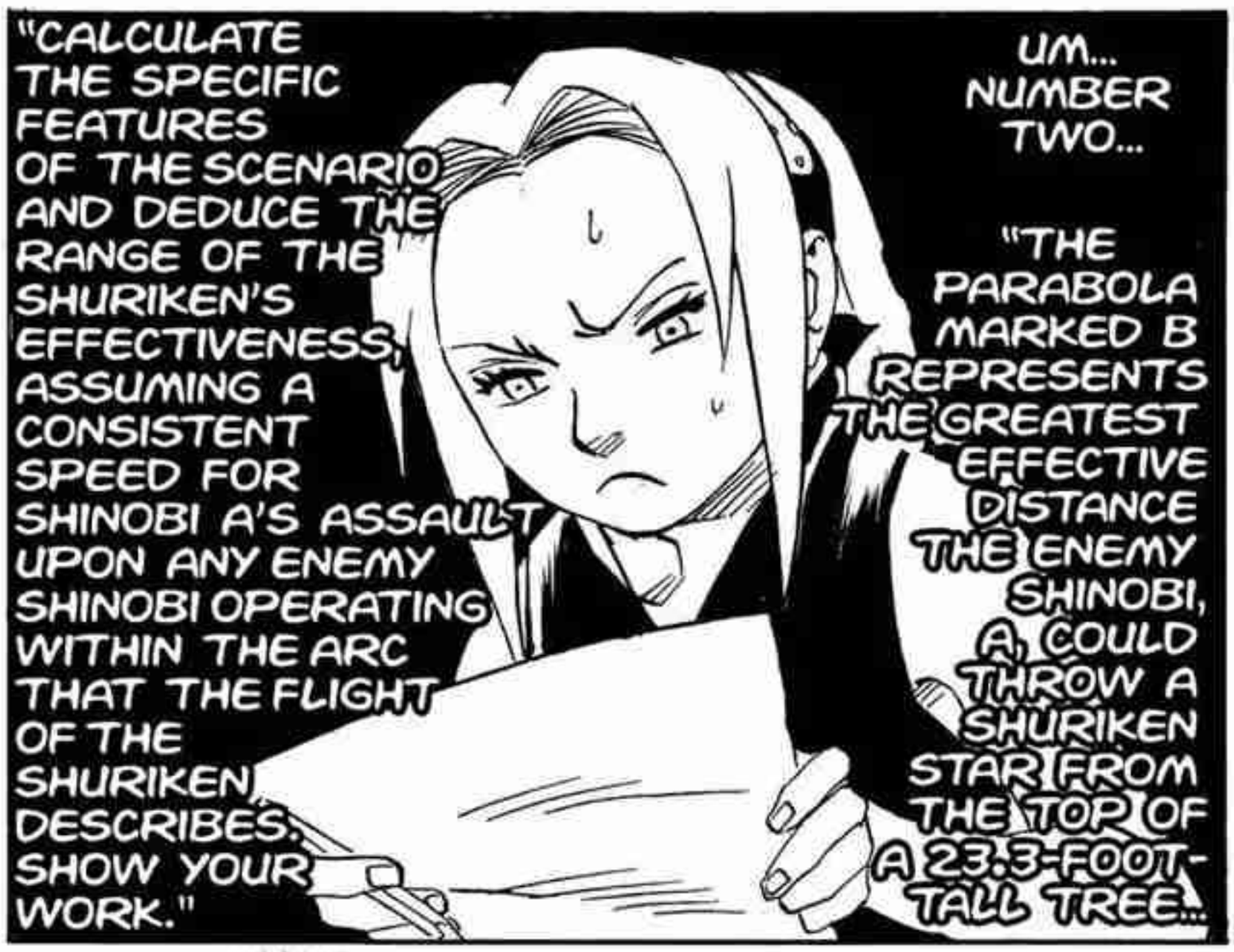
WHOA. FIRST UP IS CRYPTO-GRAPHY.

...

NARUTO IS AN IDIOT... I JUST HOPE HE DOESN'T PANIC.

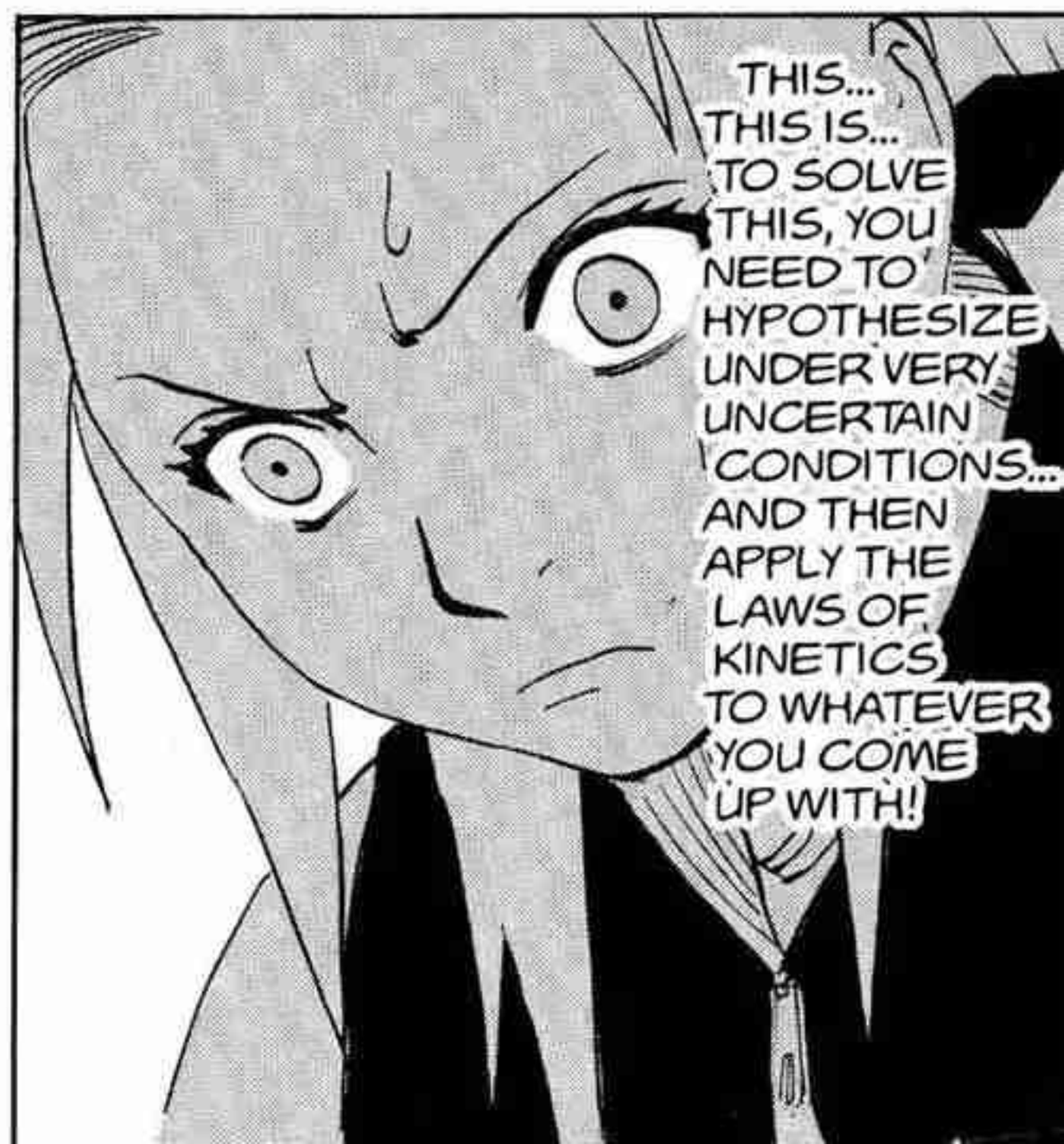
THIS IS SO NOT GOOD!

...I WONDER HOW NARUTO'S DOING...
NEXT!


"CALCULATE THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE SCENARIO AND DEDUCE THE RANGE OF THE SHURIKEN'S EFFECTIVENESS, ASSUMING A CONSISTENT SPEED FOR SHINOBI A'S ASSAULT UPON ANY ENEMY SHINOBI OPERATING WITHIN THE ARC THAT THE FLIGHT OF THE SHURIKEN DESCRIBES. SHOW YOUR WORK."
UM... NUMBER TWO...
"THE PARABOLA MARKED B REPRESENTS THE GREATEST EFFECTIVE DISTANCE THE ENEMY SHINOBI, A, COULD THROW A SHURIKEN STAR FROM THE TOP OF A 23.3-FOOT-TALL TREE...

...BUT I'VE GOT TO CON-CEN-TRATE ON MY OWN WORK!!
I'VE GOT TO HANG ONTO ALL MY POINTS, TO MAKE UP FOR HIM...

OF COURSE, NEITHER CAN MOST OF THE PEOPLE HERE. IT'S A KILLER...
THERE'S NO WAY NARUTO COULD SOLVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS!!
COURSE, I CAN ANSWER IT.

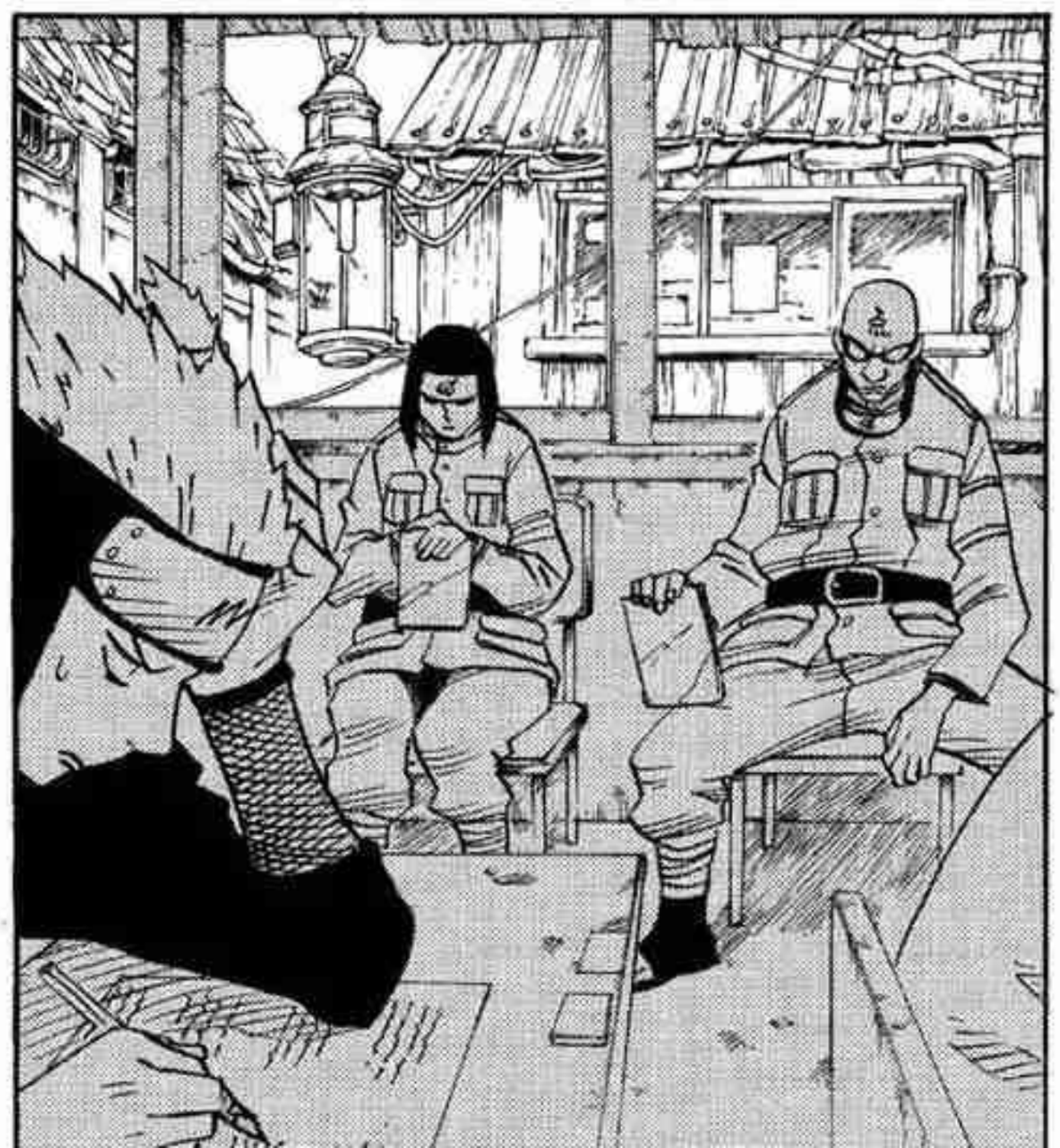

THIS... THIS IS... TO SOLVE THIS, YOU NEED TO HYPOTHESIZE UNDER VERY UNCERTAIN CONDITIONS... AND THEN APPLY THE LAWS OF KINETICS TO WHATEVER YOU COME UP WITH!

HEH... HEH.
HMF.
QUESTION NUMBER 10 THIS QUESTION WILL NOT BE PROVIDED UNTIL FORTY-FIVE MINUTES INTO THE EXAM. AT THAT TIME, PLEASE ANSWER THE PROCTOR'S QUESTION TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY.
AND WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH NUMBER TEN?
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO ANSWER A SINGLE ONE OF THESE QUESTIONS.
WELL, WELL...
SIGH

GRO-AN
AW...
MAN, AM I SCREWED HERE. TOTALLY. SERIOUSLY. FATALLY SCREWED!

WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?

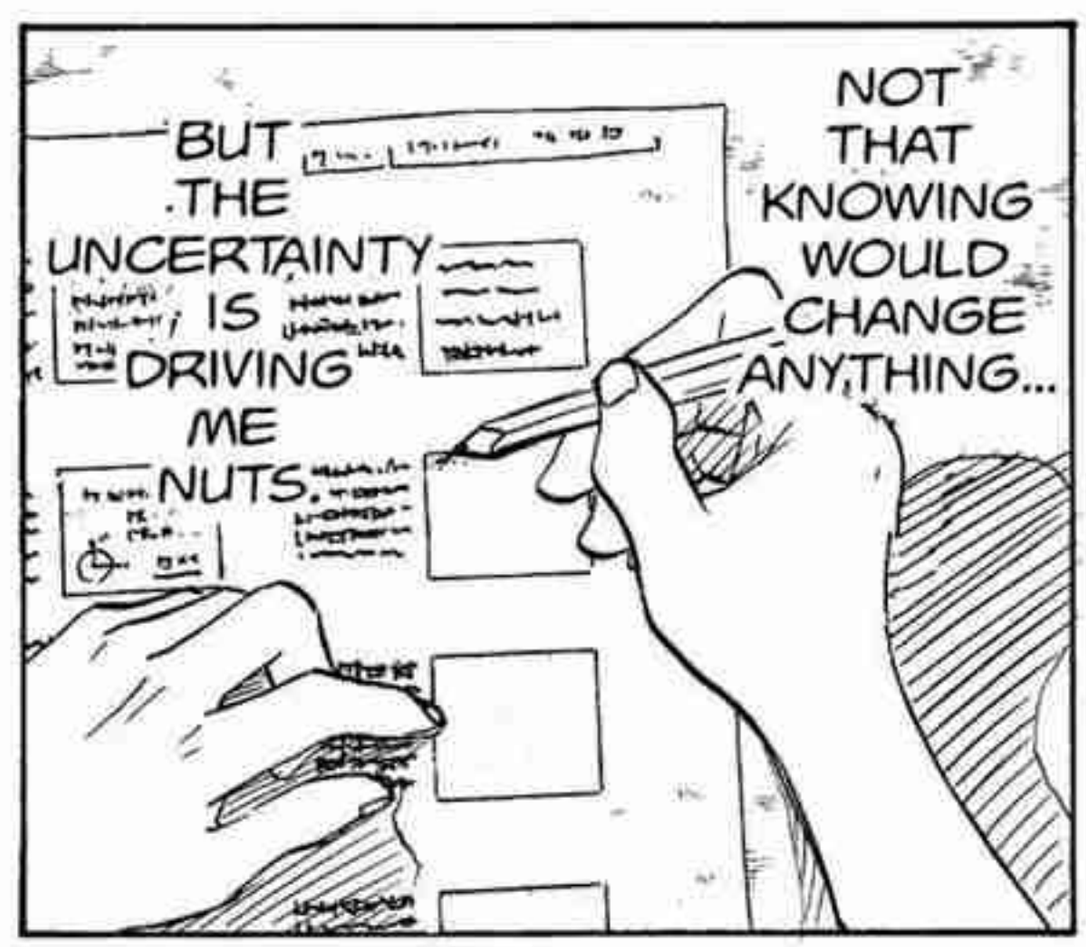
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT DO I DO?

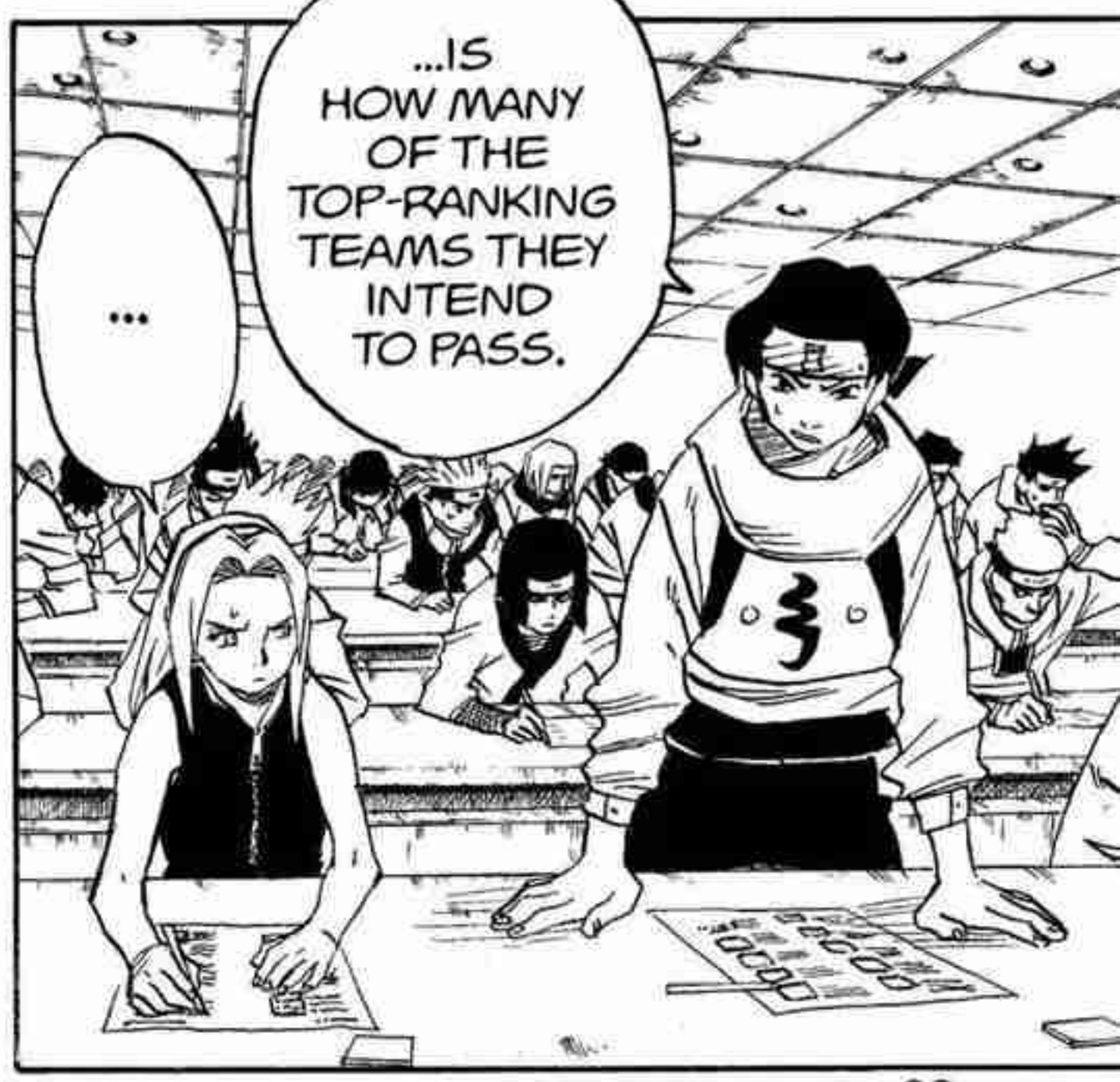


...MAKES IT PRETTY CLEAR THAT WE'RE COMPETING AGAINST EACH OTHER. OBVIOUSLY, ONLY THE TEAMS THAT KEEP THE MOST POINTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO PASS.

I JUST WISH I KNEW WHERE THE CUT-OFF LIES- HOW MANY OF THE TOP TEAMS CAN PASS...!

RULE NUMBER 2...



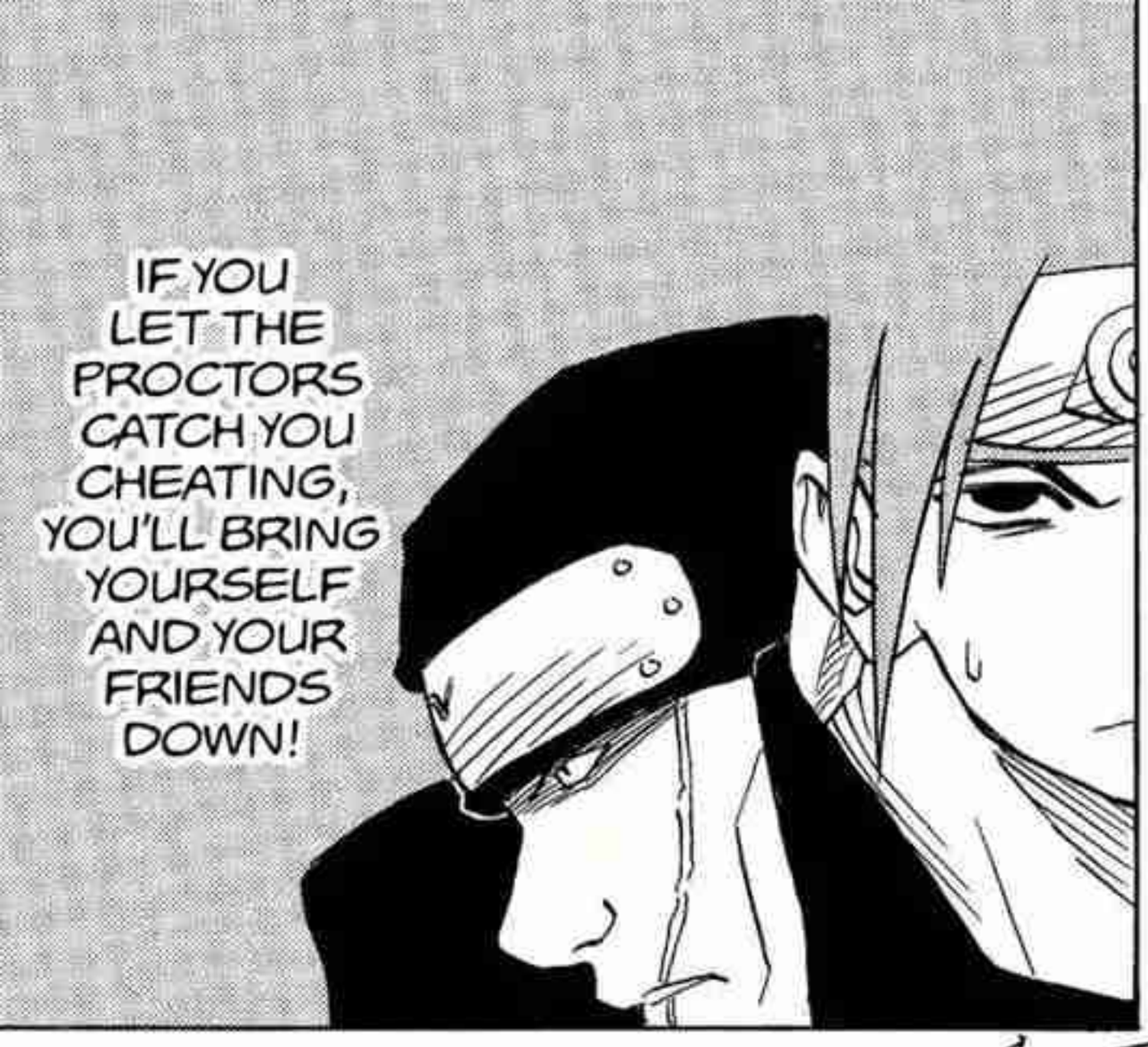


UNLESS YOU'RE HOPING TO FAIL.

KNOWING THAT NOW ISN'T GOING TO HELP YOU, IS IT?

CHA

MY ONLY HOPE IS TO CHEAT SO WELL THEY DON'T CATCH ME!!!


IF YOU LET THE PROCTORS CATCH YOU CHEATING, YOU'LL BRING YOURSELF AND YOUR FRIENDS DOWN!

!
THE AXE HAS FALLEN SOMEWHERE!

SCRATCH
SCRATCH

!!
HOLD IT!!

IF YOU ASPIRE TO BECOME CHÛNIN... ...IF YOU WANT TO BE THE BEST SHINOBI YOU CAN BE... ... THEN YOU'D BETTER START ACTING LIKE YOU ALREADY ARE!
...

YOU'RE HISTORY IF YOU DON'T FIGURE IT OUT!
THEY'RE ALSO TESTING...

WAKE UP, NARUTO!

UNBELIEVABLE... THIS IS AN "INTELLIGENCE" TEST... IN MORE THAN JUST THE ACADEMIC SENSE!
SHIVER SHIVER

...
NOW I GET IT!!

THEY WANT US TO CHEAT... LIKE SHINOBI! WITHOUT GETTING CAUGHT!

...OUR INFORMATION-GATHERING SKILLS!

...REALLY WELL! THE WAY THE BEST SHINOBI WOULD, IF THEY NEEDED THIS KIND OF INFORMATION IN A REAL-WORLD MISSION!

SHINOBI MUST LEARN TO UNCOVER THE SECRETS WITHIN SECRETS. THE PROCTORS WANT US TO CHEAT...

...BUT HOW SKILLFULLY WE CAN DISCOVER THEM!

WHAT WE'RE BEING TESTED ON IS NOT WHETHER WE KNOW THE ANSWERS...

...THE REAL MESSAGE IS THAT YOU CAN BE CAUGHT FOUR TIMES BEFORE YOU FACE DISQUALIFICATION!

LOOK AT HOW THEY SET UP THE "PERFECT SCORE, MINUS PENALTIES" SCENARIO! WITH TWO POINTS DEDUCTED EVERY TIME YOU GET CAUGHT CHEATING...

ANY MINUTE NOW, EVERYONE WHO'S FIGURED IT OUT WILL START GOING FOR IT!

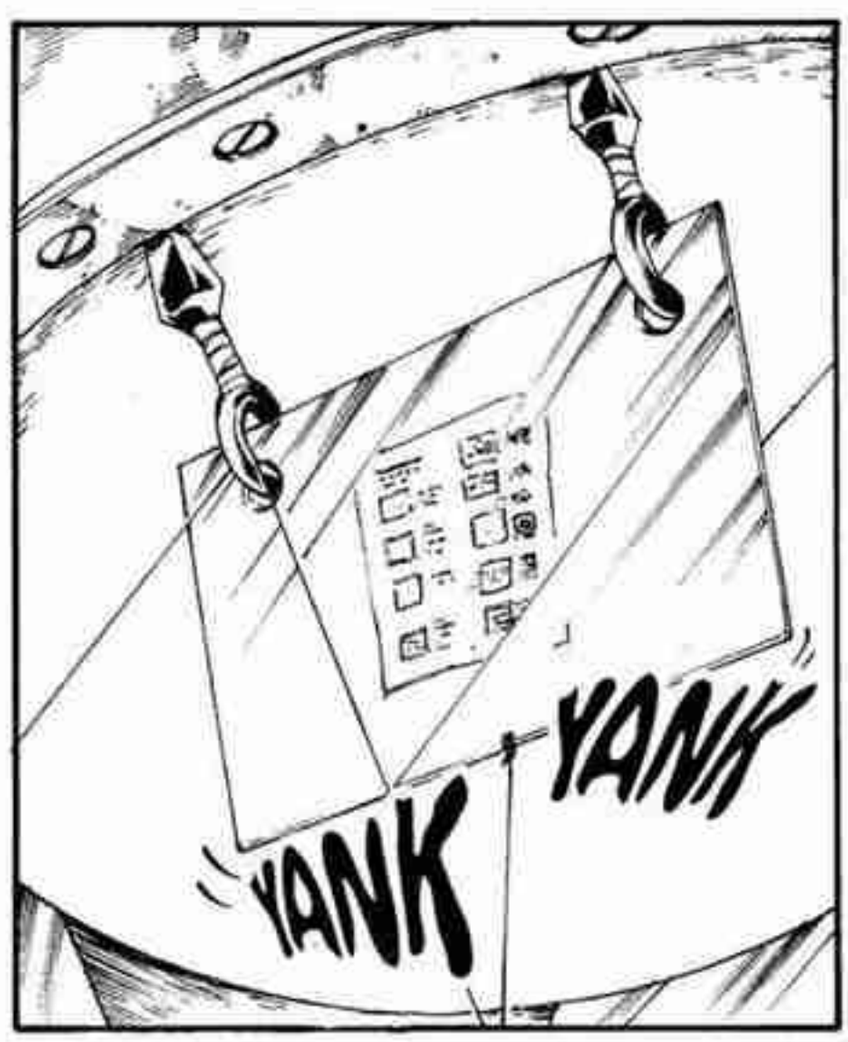
COME ON, NARUTO!

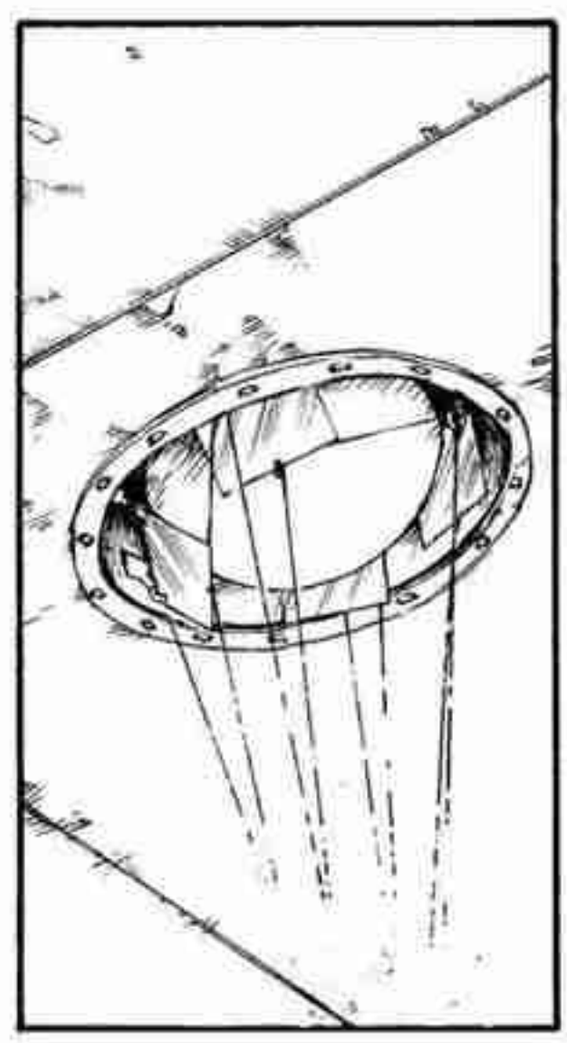
WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!
WOO-HOO! GOOD BOY, AKAMARU! NEXT IS QUESTION NUMBER 4...

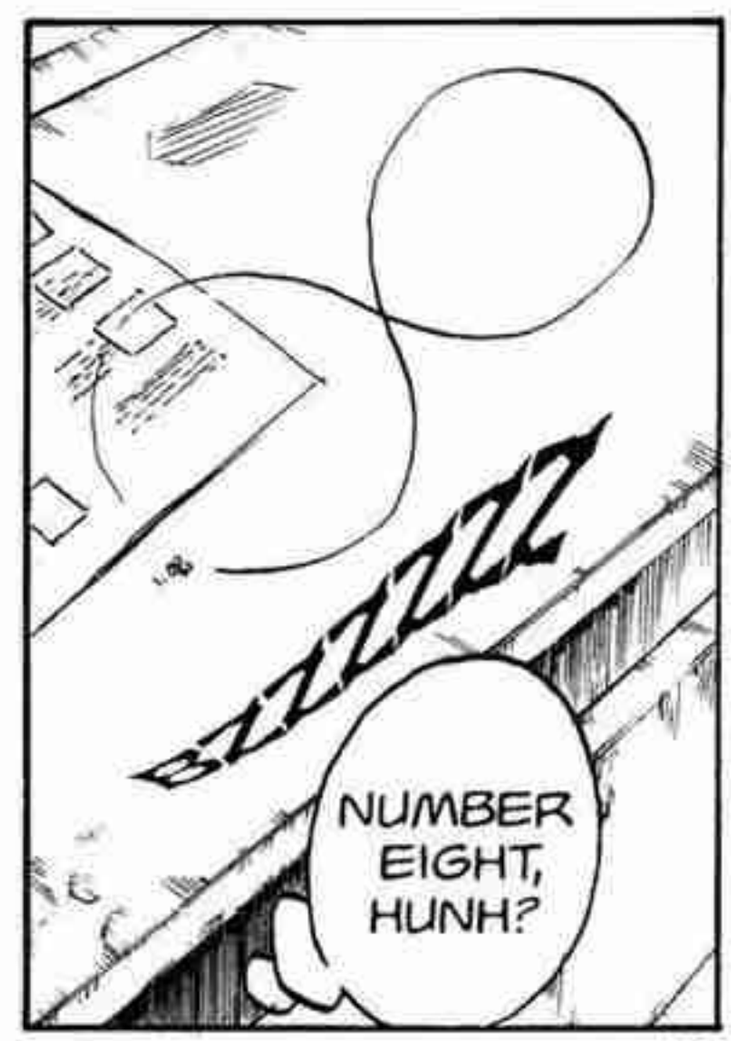
PEEEEK
PEEEEK

EXCELLENT! TELL ME MORE!

SCRATCH SCRATCH

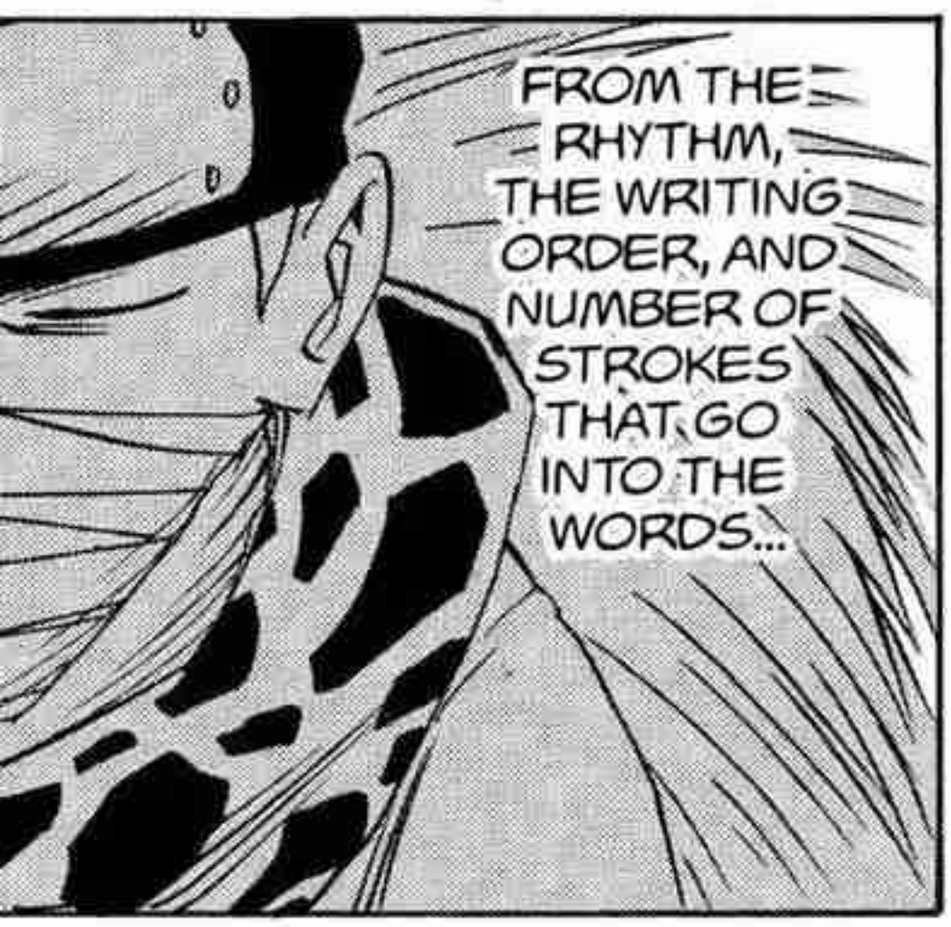

YANK
YANK




BZZZZZZ
NUMBER EIGHT, HUNH?

TUG

LEE, IF YOU CAN SEE IT, ADJUST YOUR HEADBAND...
YANK
YANK

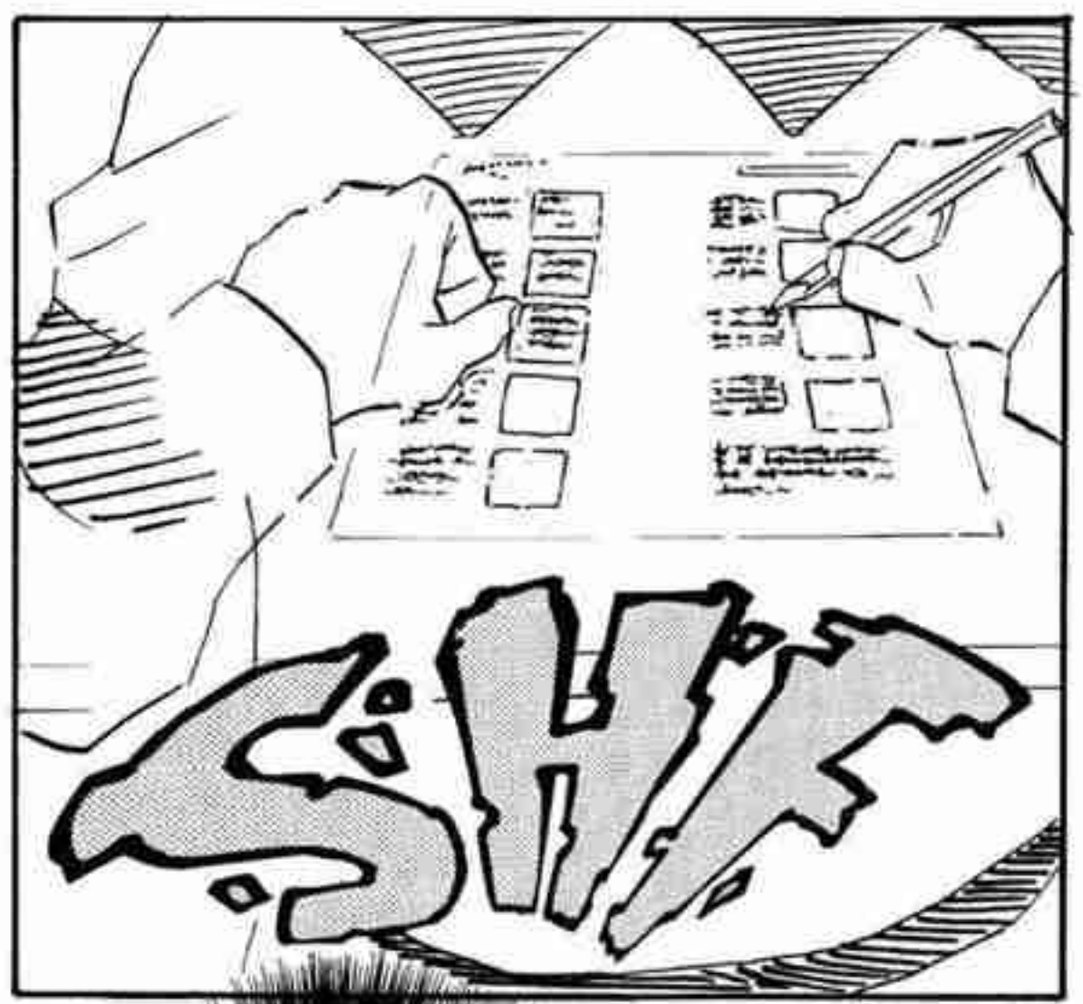

FROM THE RHYTHM, THE WRITING ORDER, AND NUMBER OF STROKES THAT GO INTO THE WORDS...

SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

SCRATCH SCRATCH

SCRATCH SCRATCH
...GOT IT...

BYAKUGAN! THE ALL-SEEING EVIL EYE!



USING THE SHARINGAN COPY EYE!!

ON

NG

IF I DON'T CHEAT, I'M DEAD ANYWAY!

RATS!!

TICK TOCK

I'M ALMOST OUT OF TIME!

AAAARGH!

AAH!!

!!

TH OK

!!

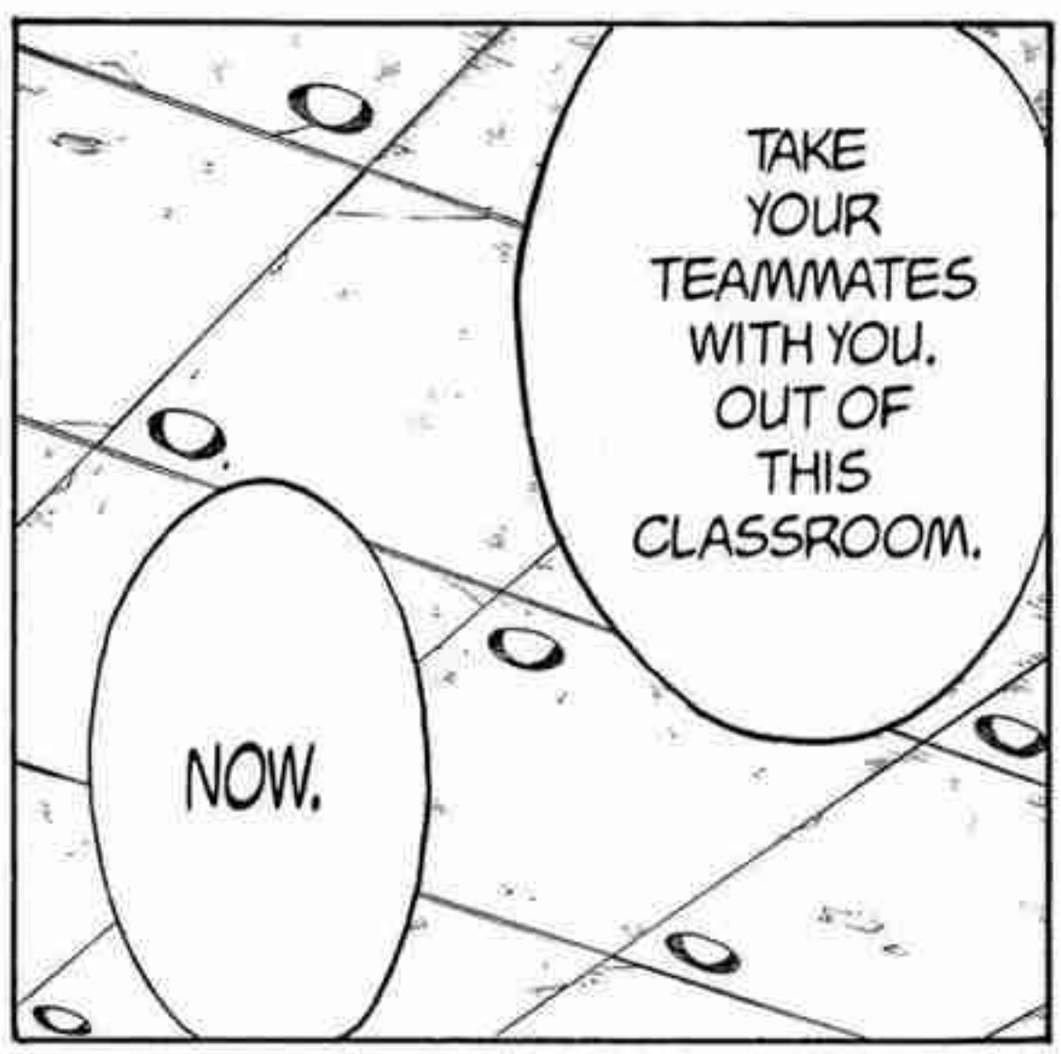
SWOOSH

THAT WAS CLOSE...
I WAS ABOUT TO TURN AROUND.

READ THIS WAY

THAT'S FIVE STRIKES...
...AND YOU'RE OUT!

WH-WHAT WAS THAT FOR?


TAKE YOUR TEAMMATES WITH YOU. OUT OF THIS CLASSROOM.
NOW.

NO WAY...
N...

YIPE! THAT WAS TOO CLOSE. NO WAY AM I GONNA RISK CHEATING... NOT ALONE!
N- NARUTO...

YOU'RE DONE HERE. MOVE IT!
DANG!
TRUDGE TRUDGE

YOU CAN LOOK AT MY PAPER, IF YOU WANT TO...
!

HUNH?

# Number 42:

# To Each His Own

WHY WOULD SHE HELP ME?
WH-WHAT'S HINATA TALKING ABOUT?

NARUTO... PLEASE... LOOK AT MY ANSWERS.

...

IT MUST BE SOME KIND OF TRICK!
!
GRRRR

OH... NO! NO WAY!
!!

UNLESS KIBA AND THE OTHERS PUT HER UP TO IT... FORCED HER.
BUT THAT WOULD BE SUCH A DIRTY TRICK... HINATA'S NOT THAT KIND OF GIRL...

BLUSH
...

IT'S... IT'S JUST...

OHHHHH

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU IF YOU HELP ME?!
LEVEL WITH ME!

I... ...YOU...

FIDGET FIDGET

...

ULP!

I DON'T WANT YOU... TO HAVE TO LEAVE SO SOON, NARUTO.

PEEK
HMM-
HH- ♪
HHMM...

GOOD THING HINATA WAS NEXT TO ME!
THIS IS MY LUCKY DAY.
BOY!

...

SCRATCH
SCRATCH

!!
EH?
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

HUH?

DON'T YOU GET IT?
HINATA...

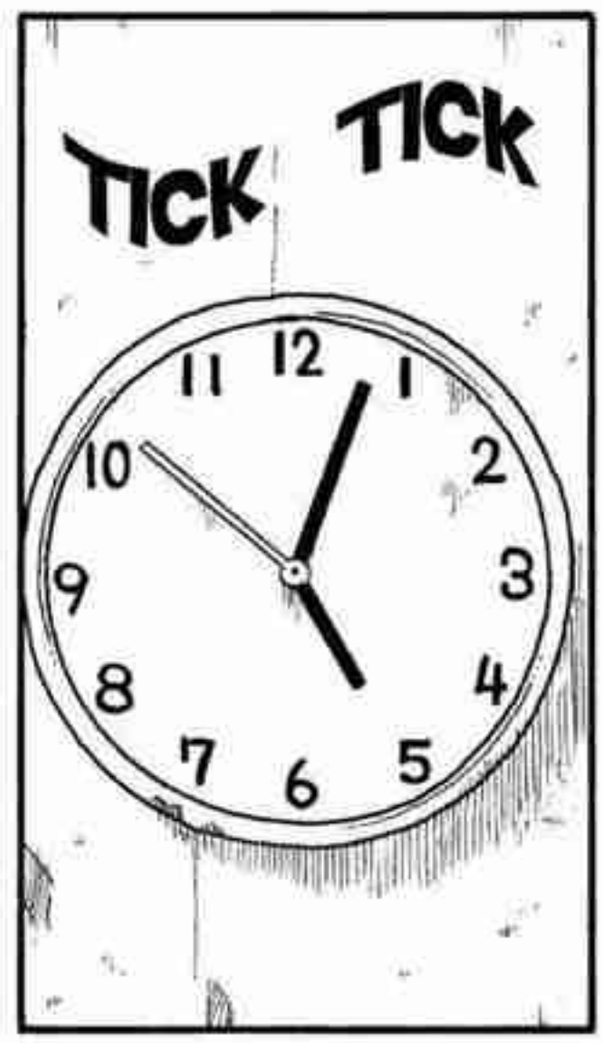
A WORLD-CLASS NINJA LIKE ME JUST ISN'T THE KIND OF GUY WHO CHEATS!

GREAT. SHE BELIEVED ME. NOW I'VE GOT MY HONOR...
AND I'M SCREWED!
...TRYING TO BE A BIG SHOT.

HEY, NO PROBLEM.
I-I'M SORRY I BOTHERED YOU...

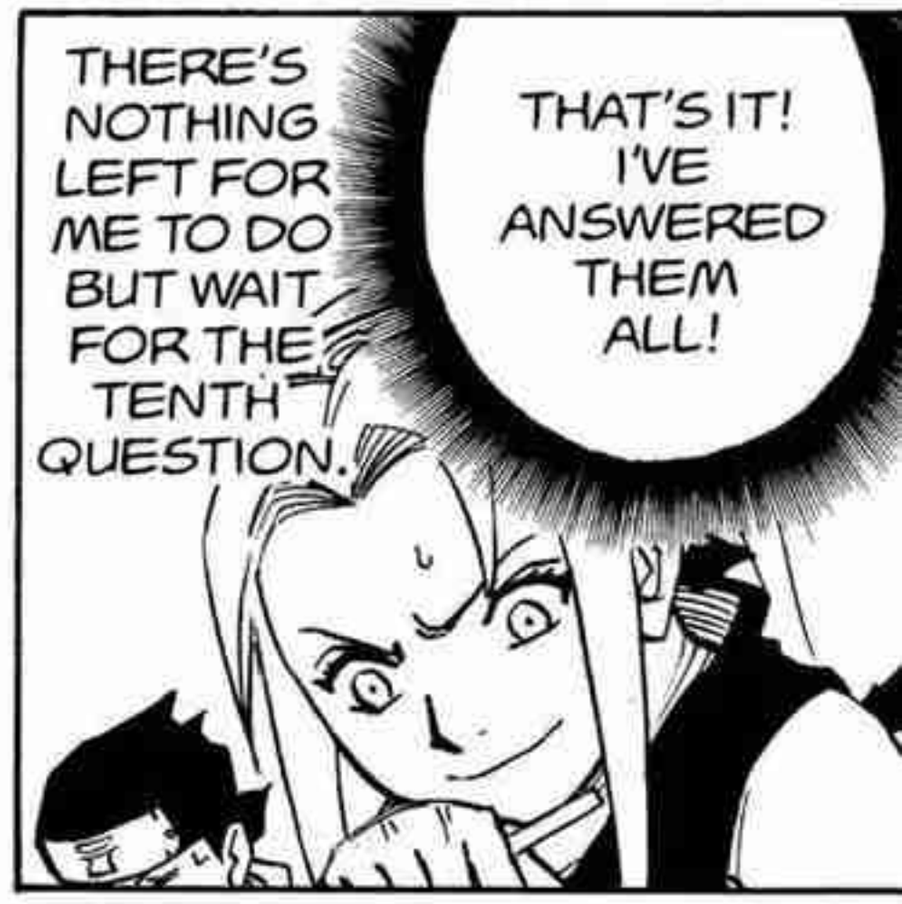
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

THE TEST'S BEEN GOING FOR HALF AN HOUR...! ONLY ANOTHER HALF LEFT!
TICK
TICK


TICK
TICK
12
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11

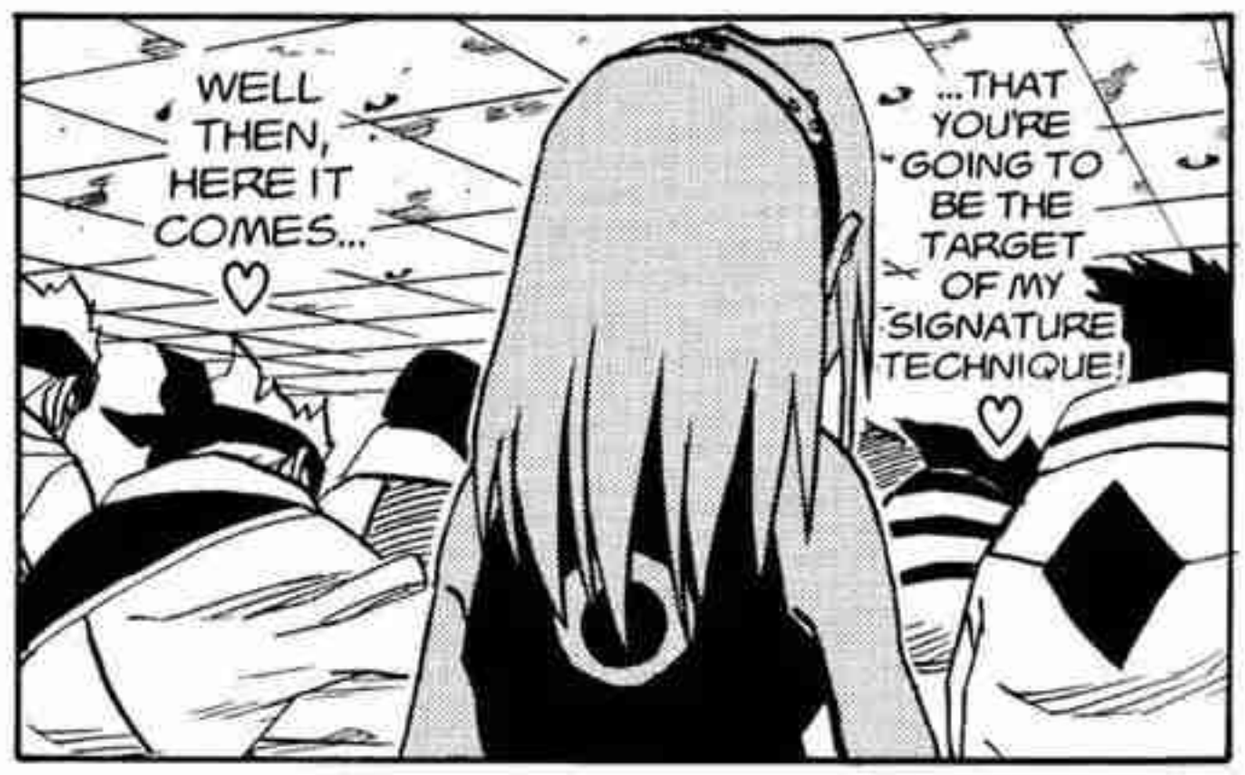
AT THIS POINT...
...THAT LAST QUESTION IS MY ONLY HOPE.

QUESTION NUMBER 10
THIS QUESTION WILL NOT BE PROVIDED UNTIL FORTY-FIVE MINUTES INTO THE EXAM.
AT THAT TIME, PLEASE ANSWER THE PROCTOR'S QUESTION TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY.



...SO YOU OUGHT TO FEEL HONORED... ♡

SAKURA... YOUR BROAD BROW AND BIG BRAIN HAVE EARNED MY RESPECT...

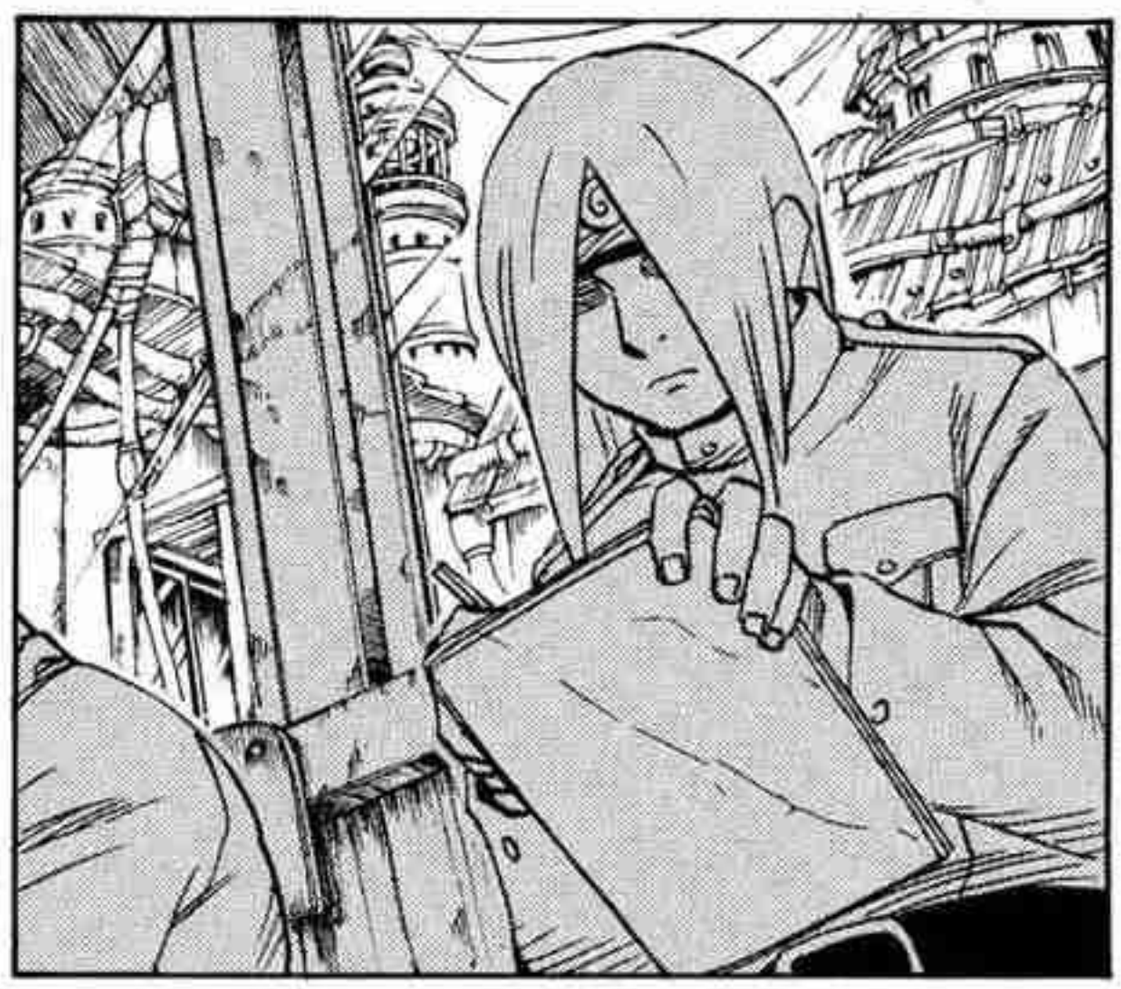


SAKURA...

YOU'RE A DEAR, LETTING ME POSSESS YOU LIKE THIS... AND SEE ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS! ♡

HEH HEH HEH...

SORRY, SAKURA... NOT.



NO WAY!!

YOU TOO, NUMBER 23.

YOU'RE OUT!

TICK

TOCK

DANG...

D...

SL

AM

THAT'S THIRTEEN CELLS THEY'VE FLUNKED OUT SO FAR!

TICK

NUMBER 43 AND NUMBER 27... START WALKING.

YOU ALL FAIL!

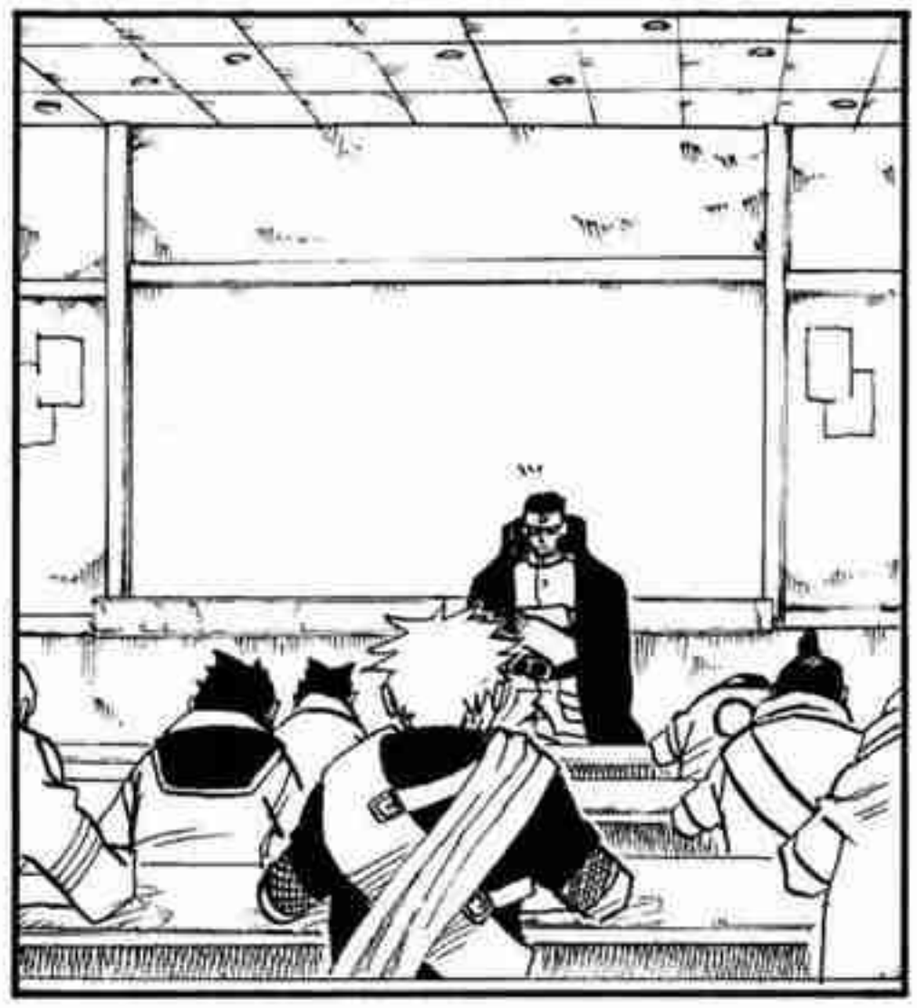
TOCK

HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY WATCH THIS MANY STUDENTS AT ONCE?!

CHEATED FIVE TIMES?! ME? WHAT PROOF DO YOU HAVE?

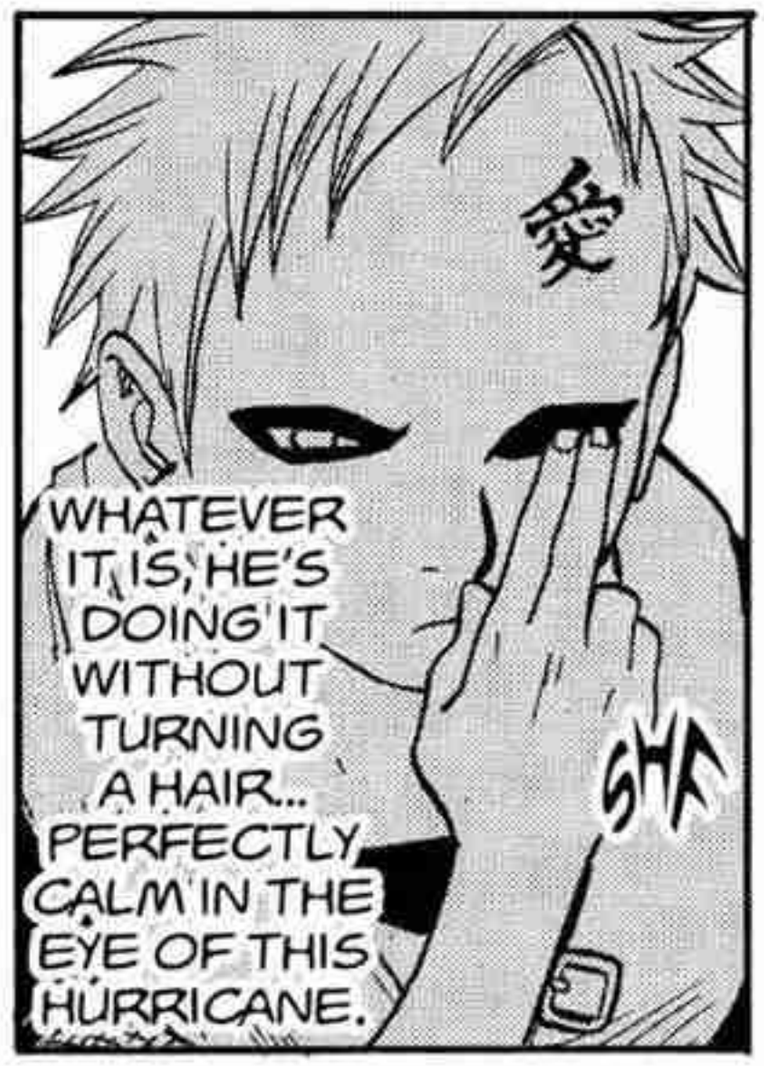
POW
AAGH!!
YOU FEEL THIS? WELL, I AM AS SKILLED AS I AM POWERFUL!
!!
GULP!
LISTEN UP AND LISTEN GOOD. WE PROCTORS ARE THE ELITE. EVEN IN A GROUP AS SKILLED AS THE ONE GATHERED HERE TODAY, WE ARE FAR AND AWAY THE BEST. WE MISS NOTHING!
OW...
!!!
YOU GOT THAT, KIDS?

HMMF...
THAT BRAT IS UP TO SOMETHING!



SKITTER
SKITTER

FOR A ROOKIE, HE'S AMAZING.


愛
WHATEVER IT IS, HE'S DOING IT WITHOUT TURNING A HAIR... PERFECTLY CALM IN THE EYE OF THIS HURRICANE.
SHF

POOK

SKITTER

MY OPTIC NERVE IS RECONNECTED
...
...OPENING MY THIRD EYE!!

愛
SKUFF

SKUFF

愛

PUFF

BLAST IT...!
FLOAT

SOME-THING IN MY EYE...
OW!

FLOAT

FLUSH

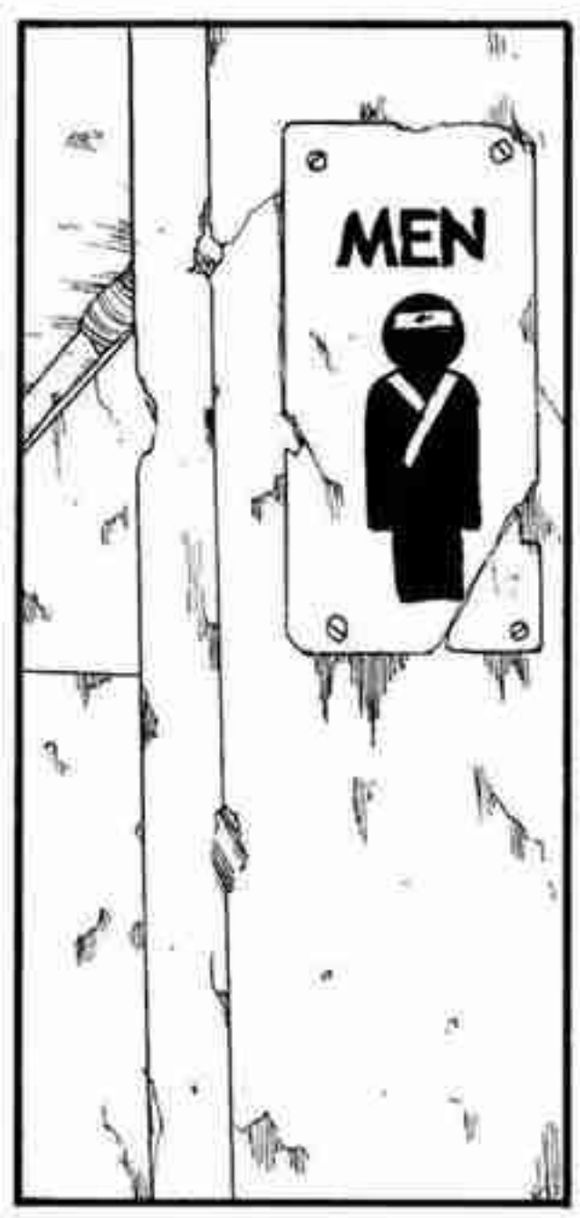
CHUNIN JOURNEYMAN NINJA SELECTION EXAMINATION

I'VE GOT TO GO TO THE BATH-ROOM...

WHAT IS IT?
EXCUSE ME.

WHY NOT?
OF COURSE. ONE OF THE PROCTORS WILL ACCOMPANY YOU.

THEY THINK THEY'RE SO SLICK!


MEN

NICE GOING, SCARECROW!

PRETTY SAD!

AND THEY NEVER EVEN NOTICED THAT THERE'S BEEN ONE EXTRA PROCTOR THIS WHOLE TIME!

CRUMBL

CRUMBL

FORTY-FIVE MINUTES HAVE PASSED. THE TIME HAS COME.

NOW THAT WE'VE WEEDED OUT THE WORST OF THE SLACKERS...

LET'S MOVE ON TO THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION.

...NOW THEN, GIVE ME ALL THE ANSWERS IN ORDER, STARTING WITH NUMBER ONE. HEH HEH HEH...

SHIVER

SIGH...

SHIVER

!!

HERE IT COMES!!

GET READY FOR THE TENTH QUESTION!

CORRECT?

# Number 43:

# The Tenth Question

JUST ONE MORE MOUNTAIN TO CLIMB!
MR. BIG SHOT... HA!

RRRRR
...!!
I'M RISKING IT ALL ON ONE ROLL OF THE DICE.

AND BEFORE WE GET TO THE QUESTION ITSELF...
...I'M ADDING ONE MORE NEW RULE.

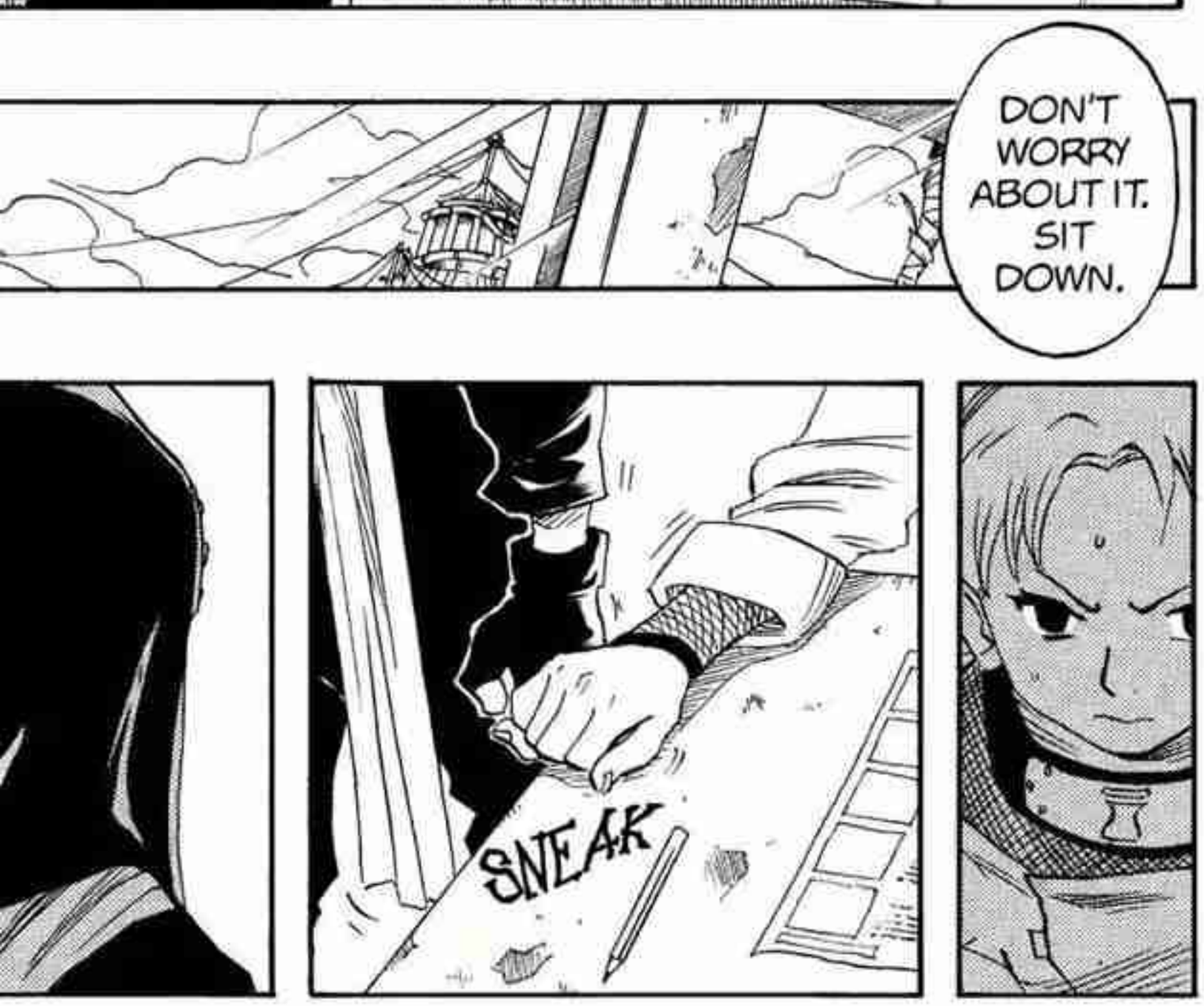
I WAS SUPPOSED TO GET YOUR FIRST NINE ANSWERS BEFORE THEY GAVE US THE TENTH QUESTION.
YOU BETTER HURRY BACK, KANKURO!

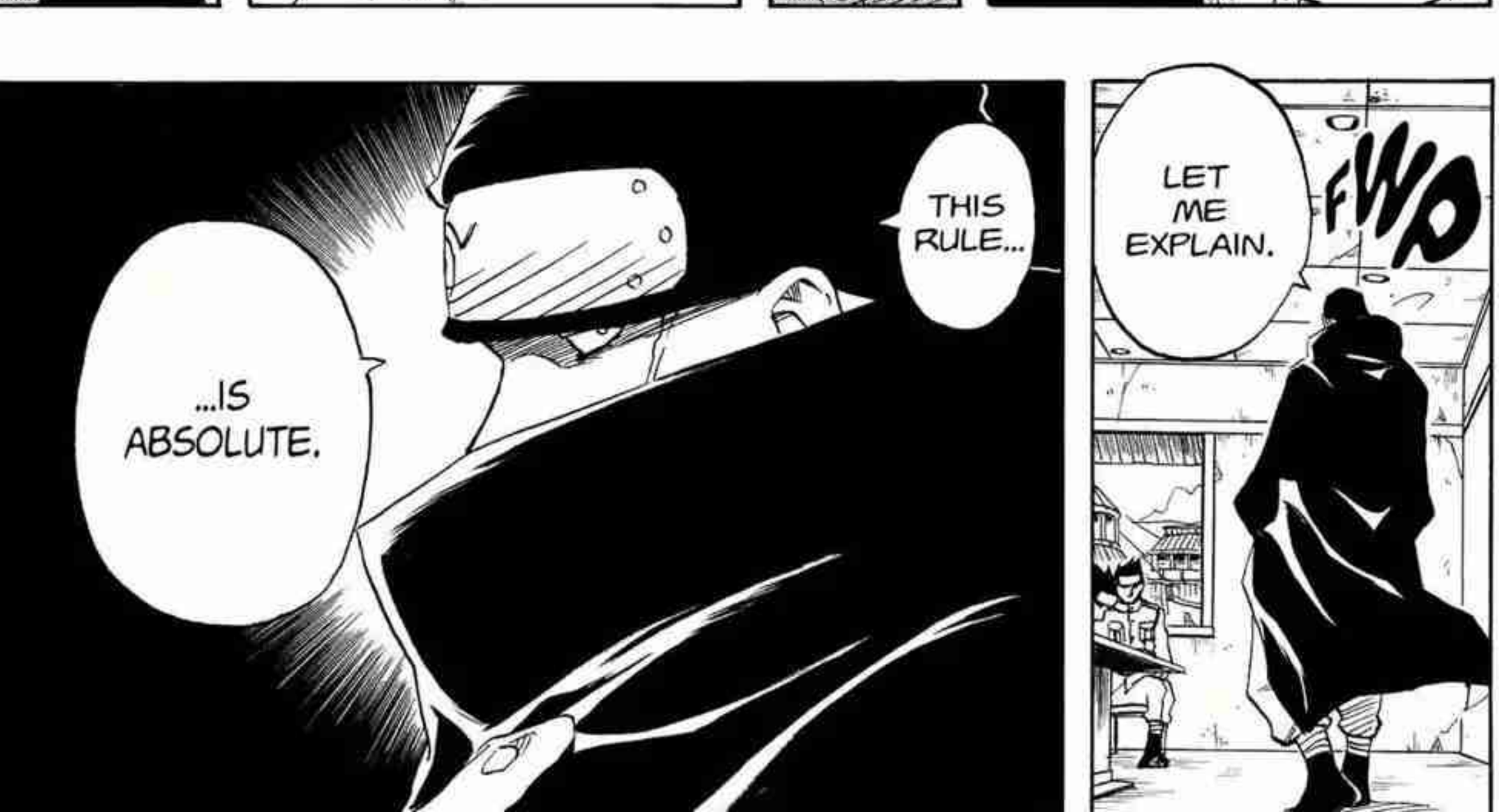
!!?

?!

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE IN LUCK.

HEH...





WOW...

JINSEI IROIRO

* JINSEI IROIRO: "THERE ARE MANY DESTINIES."

WHY?

WORD IS, THIS YEAR'S FIRST CHIEF EXAMINATION OFFICER IS MORINO IBIKI.

DON'T WORRY. WE'LL BE BUSY AGAIN BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

SIGH

IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN GO ON TRAINING MISSIONS WITHOUT THEM.

WITH OUR SUBORDINATES TIED UP IN EXAMS, WE'VE GOT TIME ON OUR HANDS.

SADIST?

!

THAT SADIST? WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE IBIKI?!

KURENAI, YOU'RE STILL A NEWBIE TO THE *JÔNIN* ELITE, SO YOU HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING.

WILL THEY EVEN MAKE IT PAST THE FIRST EXAM?

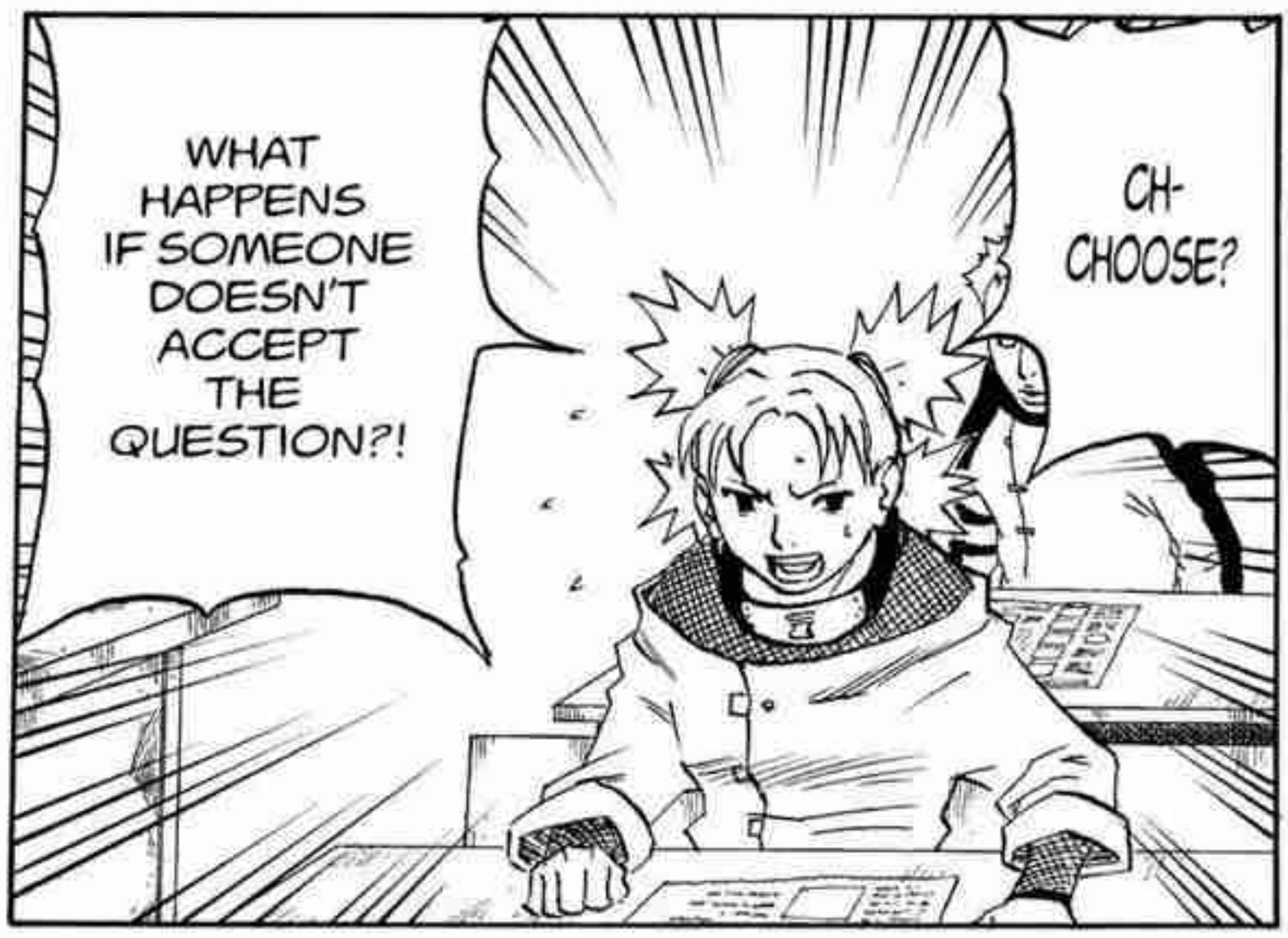
...

SIGH

TORTURE AND INTERROGATION!

...THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT THE APPLICANTS ARE BEING SUBJECTED TO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURES THAT MAKE HIM INFAMOUS AS AN INTERROGATOR.

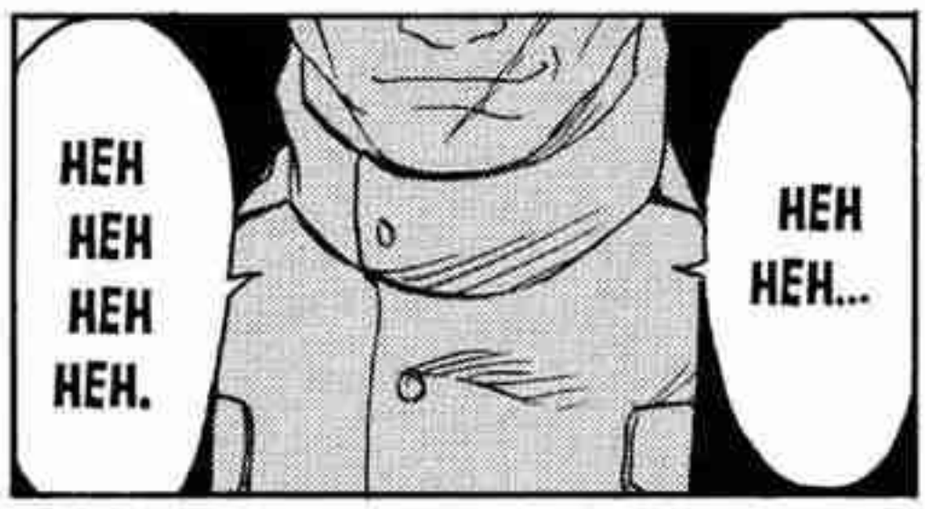
IN THE EXAM THAT'S PRESENTLY UNDERWAY... WHILE THERE MAY BE NO PHYSICAL TORTURE...

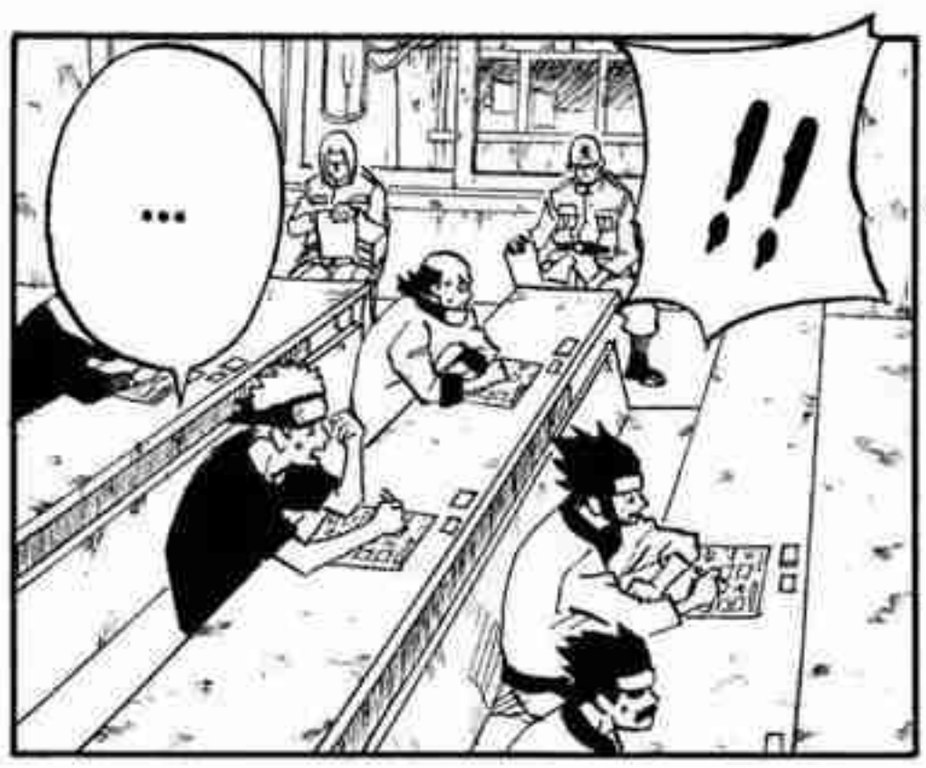


...AND FAIL!

AND BOTH OF YOUR TEAMMATES WILL FAIL RIGHT ALONG WITH YOU.

IF YOU REJECT THE QUESTION AND DON'T EVEN TRY TO ANSWER IT, YOU'LL LOSE ALL YOUR POINTS IMMEDIATELY...

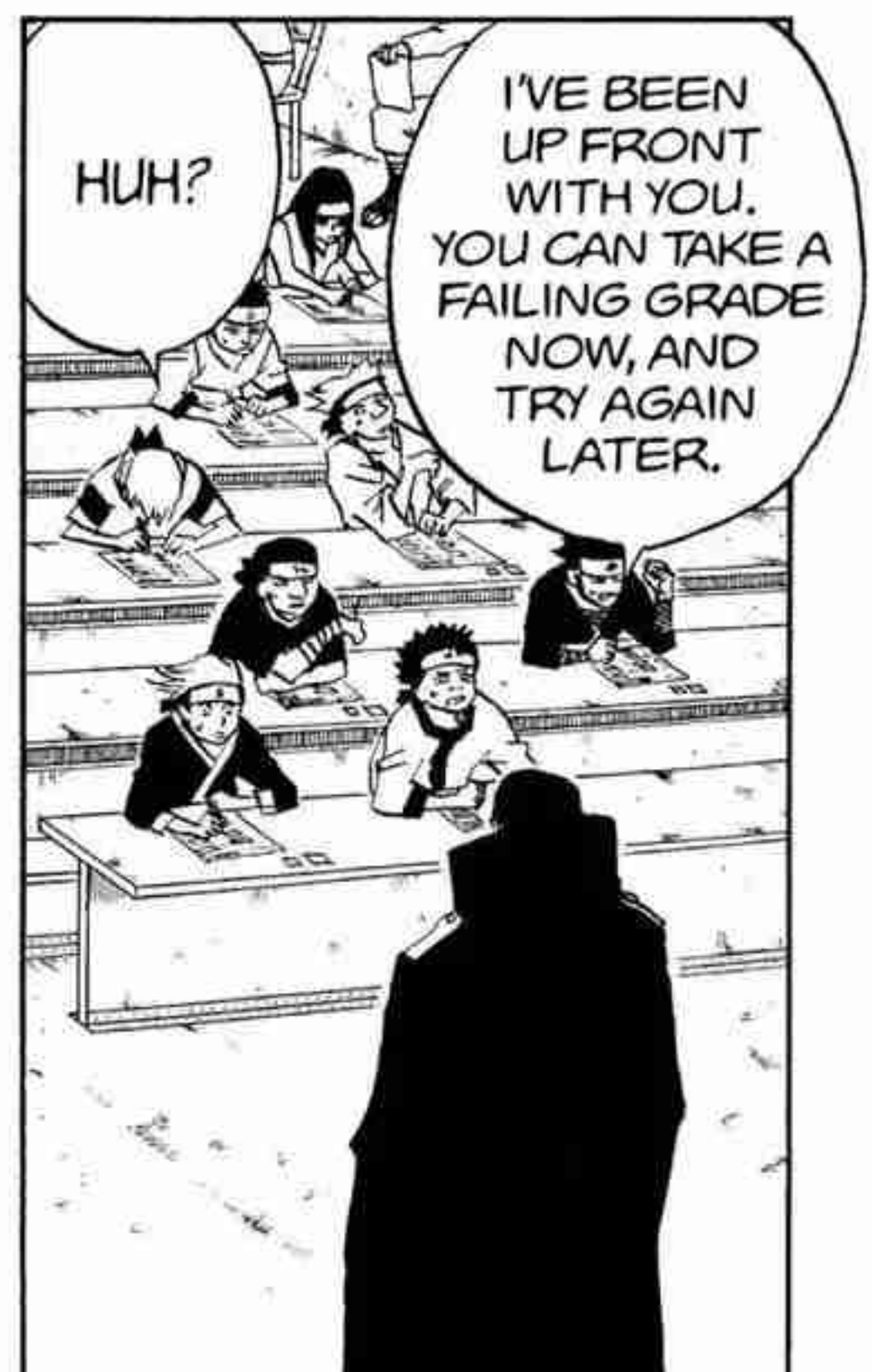

HEH HEH HEH HEH.
HEH HEH...


...
!!

THERE ARE NINJA HERE WHO'VE SAT FOR THE CHÛNIN EXAMS MORE THAN ONCE ALREADY!! WE KNOW THERE ARE!
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. THAT'S RIDICULOUS!!!
WUFF

I AM NOW.
JUST YOUR ROTTEN LUCK. I WASN'T MAKING THE RULES IN PAST YEARS.

COME BACK AND REAPPLY NEXT YEAR, AND THE YEAR AFTER THAT.
ANYONE WHO HAS DOUBTS WOULD BE SMART TO REJECT THE TENTH QUESTION RIGHT NOW.

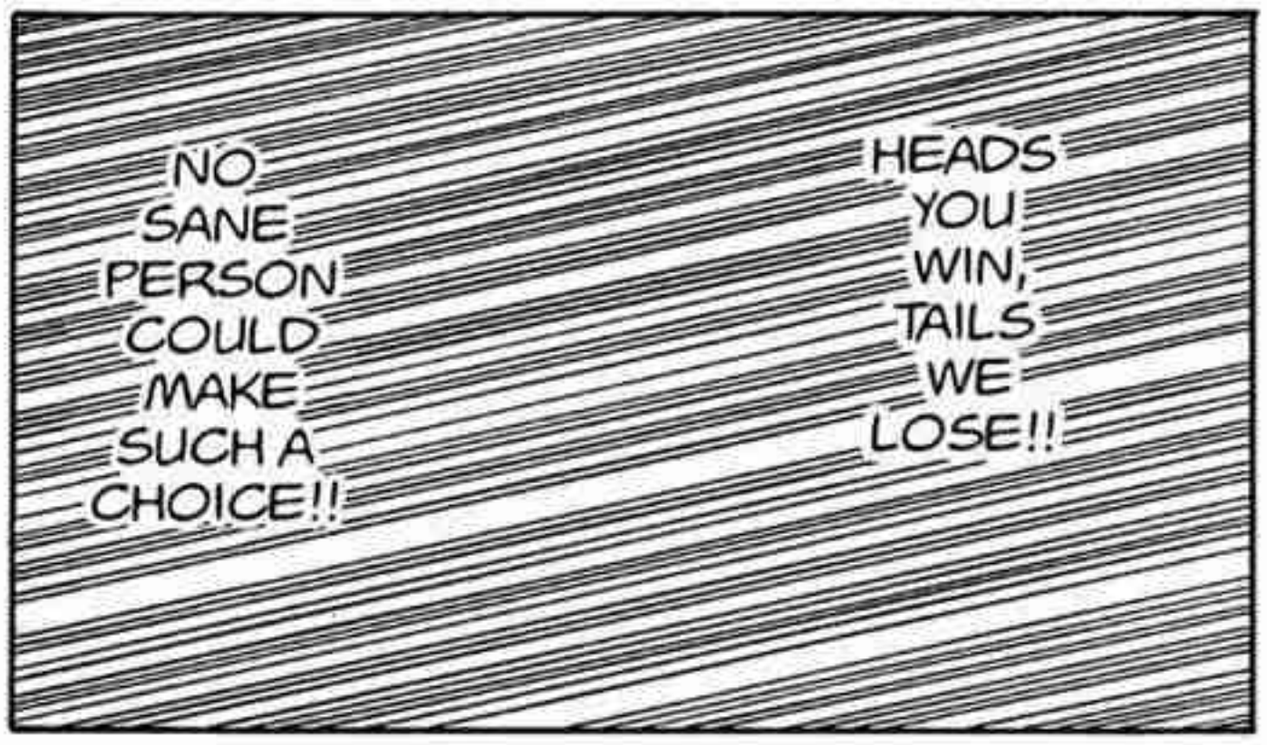

HUH?
I'VE BEEN UP FRONT WITH YOU. YOU CAN TAKE A FAILING GRADE NOW, AND TRY AGAIN LATER.

IF ANYONE ACCEPTS THE QUESTION AND CAN'T ANSWER IT...

HE'LL BE STUCK AT THE JUNIOR LEVEL FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE!

TALK ABOUT A NO-WIN SITUATION!

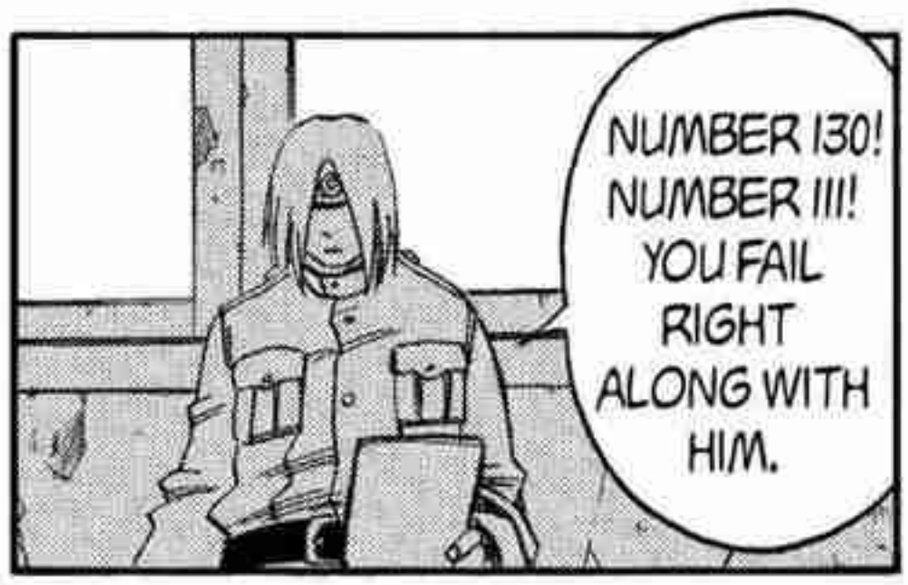
IF EVEN ONE MEMBER OF A CELL REJECTS THE QUESTION, THEN ALL THREE TEAM MEMBERS FAIL FOR THE YEAR.

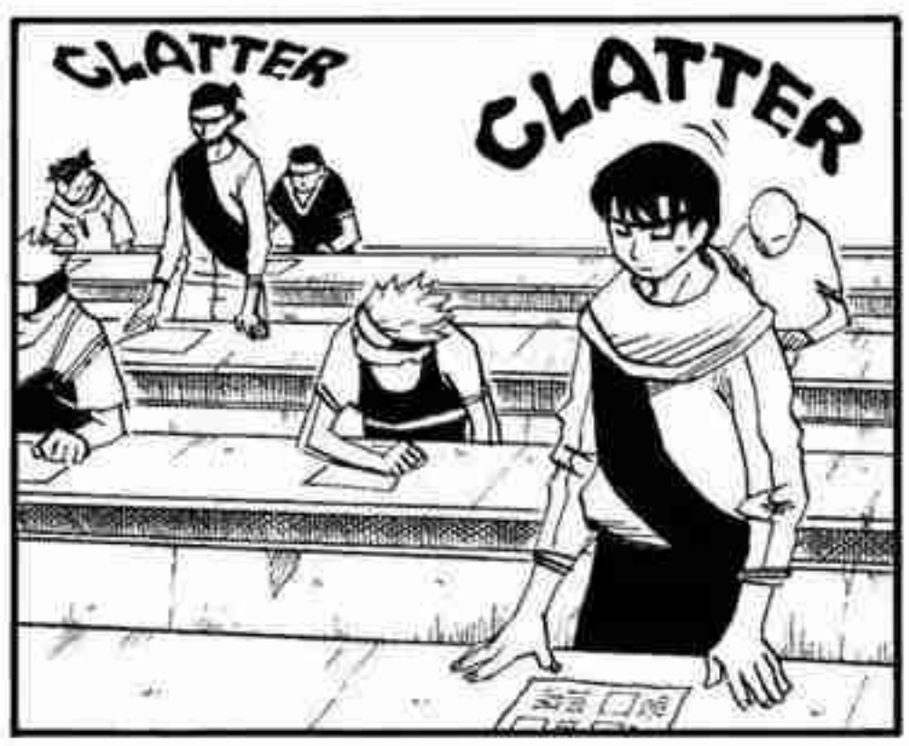


ONCE THEIR NUMBER HAS BEEN CONFIRMED, THEY WILL LEAVE THE ROOM.

THOSE WHO CHOOSE NOT TO ACCEPT SHOULD RAISE THEIR HANDS.

READ THIS WAY
...ALL I'LL LOSE IS TIME. I WON'T HAVE FAILED FOREVER, AND I CAN APPLY AGAIN FOR THE NEXT EXAM.
BUT EVEN IF NARUTO DECIDES TO PLAY IT SAFE AND REJECT THE QUESTION, AND WE ALL FAIL...
I'M SURE I CAN ANSWER THE QUESTION, WHATEVER IT MAY BE!
I DON'T INTEND TO RAISE MY HAND.
IT'D BE FOOLISH TO SACRIFICE YOURSELF FOREVER FOR OUR SAKES. REJECT THE QUESTION.
BUT NARUTO... YOU'RE DIFFERENT.
BUT...
I QUIT! I'M REJECTING THE QUESTION!
...
!
I-I...
KLATTER
SHH


NUMBER 130! NUMBER 111! YOU FAIL RIGHT ALONG WITH HIM.


CLATTER
CLATTER

NUMBER 50! FAILED!
GENNAI!! INAHO!! PLEASE FORGIVE ME!
!

...
CURSES...

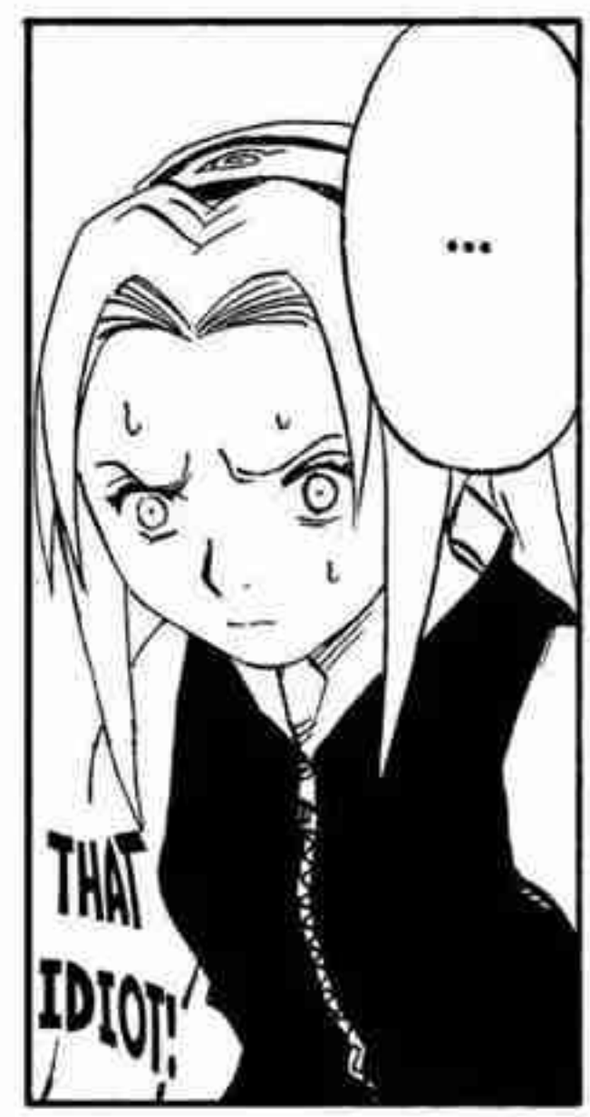
I QUIT, TOO!!
ME TOO...
ME TOO...
TAK
I-I'M SORRY, GUYS!!

M-ME TOO!!

WHY DON'T YOU RAISE YOUR HAND?
...NARUTO...

IT'S UZUMAKI NARUTO.
I AM THE CREAM OF THE ELITE. IN FACT, ONE DAY I'M GONNA BE THE NEXT LORD HOKAGE! SO REMEMBER MY NAME.

NINJA! NINJA! NINJA!
I!... I DID IT! I DID IT! I'M A NINJA!


...
THAT IDIOT!

...I'LL BE A BETTER SHINOBI THAN LORD HOKAGE!!
...AND THEN ALL THE VILLAGERS WILL HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE MY EXISTENCE AT LAST!!

I AM DOING ALL THE RIGHT THINGS, AND I'M DOING THEM FAST.
WELL, YOU'RE OLD AND STUPID!

I'M SORRY, NARUTO...
YOUR DREAM MAY BE CRAZY...

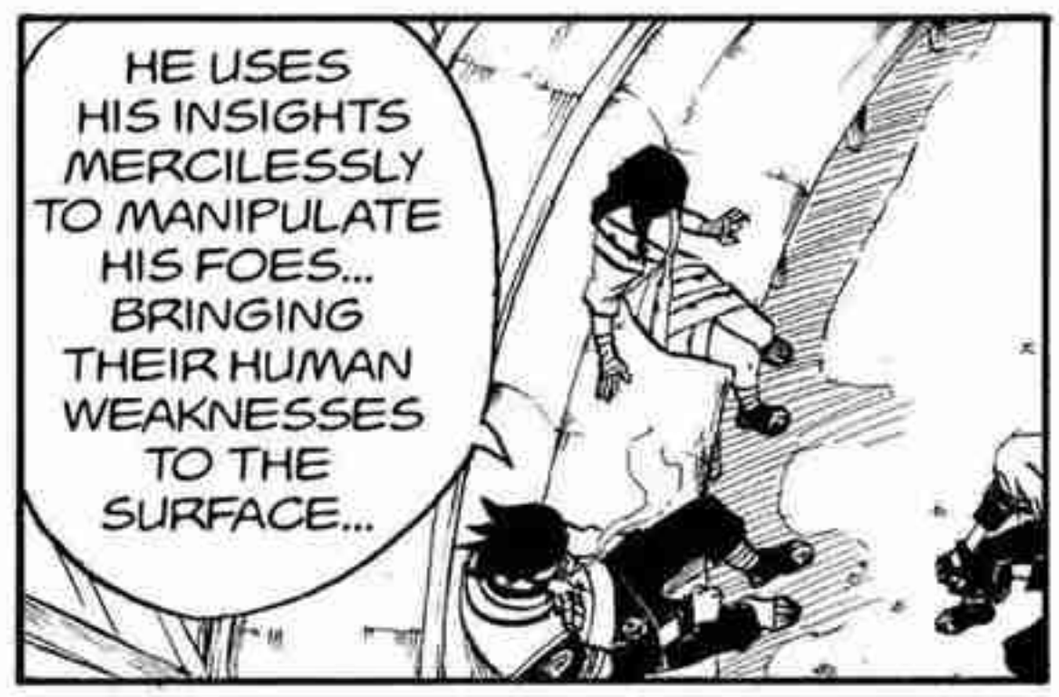
...LIKE A BROKEN RECORD!
HE'S ALWAYS GOING ON ABOUT "LORD HOKAGE" THIS AND "HOKAGE" THAT...

...BUT I DON'T WANT IT TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU FOREVER.
KRUNCH

...UNDERSTANDS THE HUMAN HEART COMPLETELY. IT'S WHAT MAKES HIM SO TERRIBLE.
THAT IBIKI...

HUNH?
!
FREEZE

...AND USING THOSE WEAKNESSES TO MAKE THEM CRACK!


HE USES HIS INSIGHTS MERCILESSLY TO MANIPULATE HIS FOES... BRINGING THEIR HUMAN WEAKNESSES TO THE SURFACE...

SHIVER
SHIVER
TRICKERY IS NO DEFENSE AGAINST HIS SKILLS AS AN INTERROGATOR.

SHUDDER
SHUDDER

!!
!!

N...
NARUTO...!!

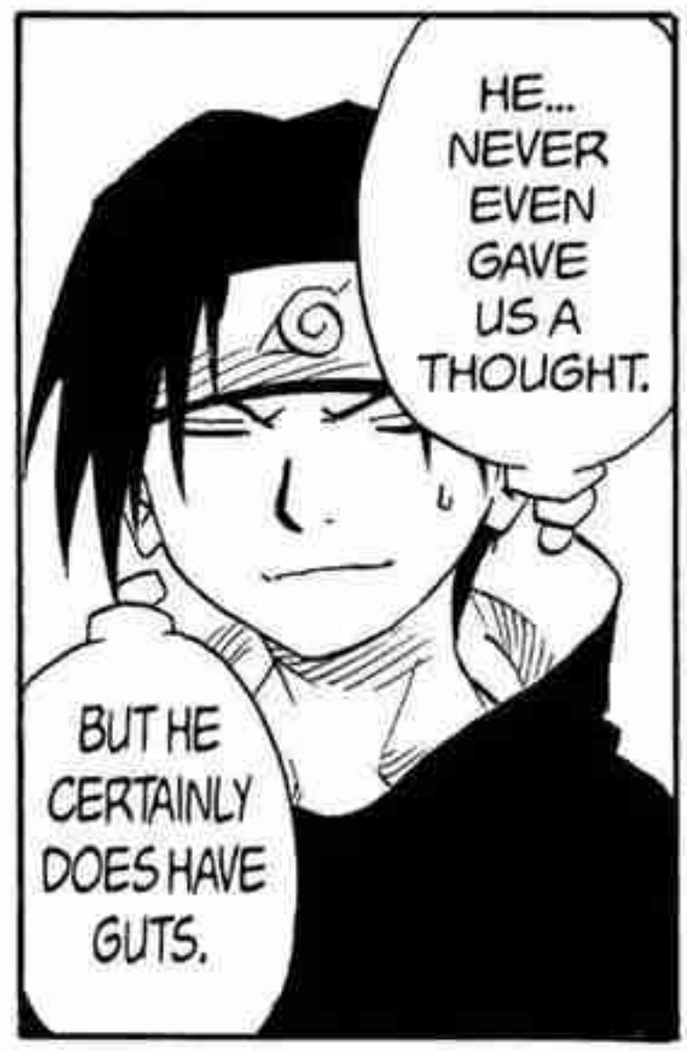
NEVER UNDERESTIMATE ME!!!
I DON'T QUIT, AND I WON'T RUN!!

EVEN IF I RISK ENDING UP A ROOKIE FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE...

I'LL ACCEPT YOUR STUPID QUESTION!!

...I'LL STILL BECOME LORD HOKAGE, EVEN IF I CAN ONLY MAKE IT BY PURE STUBBORNNESS. I DON'T CARE!!

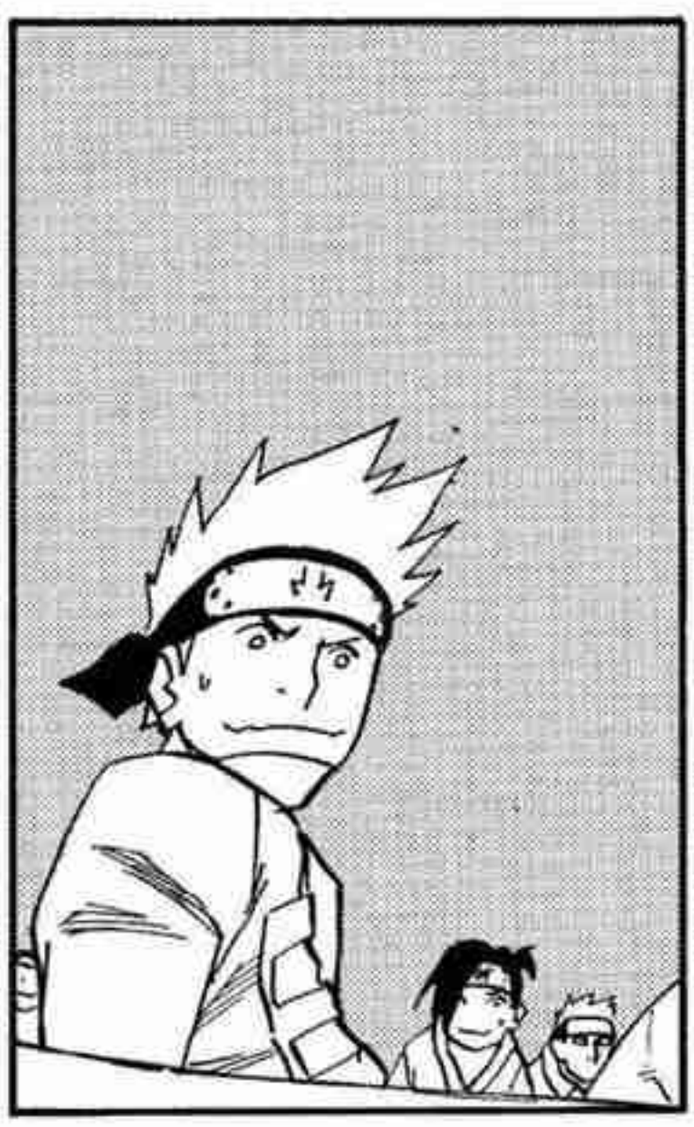
I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU!!



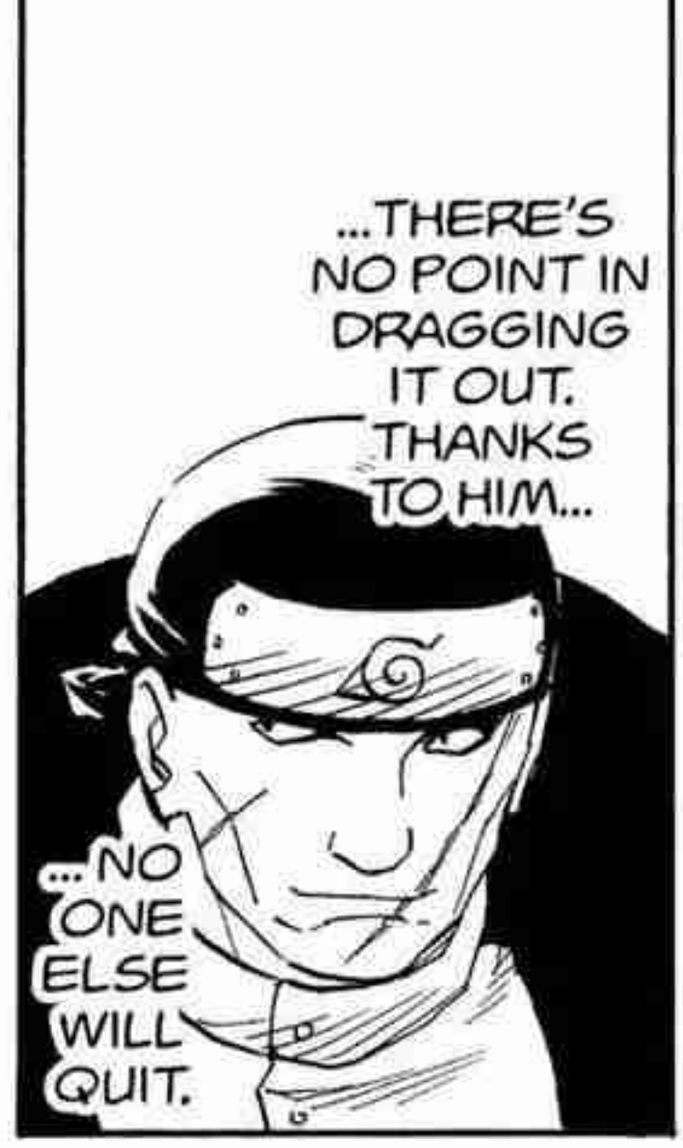
CUSSEDNESS IS PART OF MY SHINOBI SKILL SET!
I NEVER GO BACK ON MY WORD.

THIS IS A DECISION THAT COULD AFFECT THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.
QUIT NOW, WHILE YOU STILL HAVE THE CHANCE.
I'LL ASK YOU ONE LAST TIME.

SEVENTY-EIGHT OF THEM ARE STILL HERE.
HMMM... AN ENTERTAINING KID. AND INTERESTING. HE DISPELLED EVERYONE ELSE'S DOUBTS ALONG WITH HIS OWN.
MORE THAN I EXPECTED, BUT...



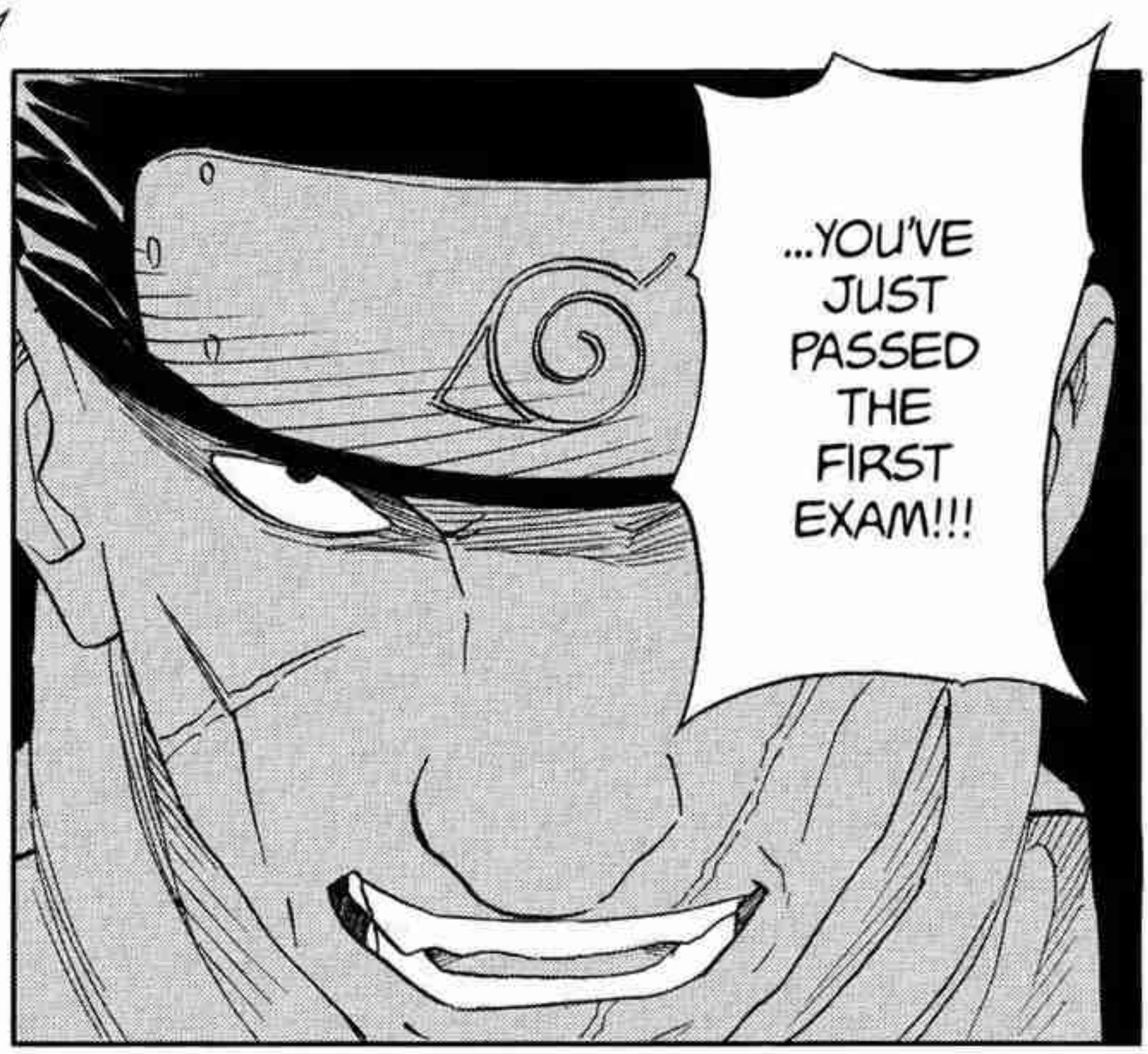
NOD
NOD


...THERE'S NO POINT IN DRAGGING IT OUT. THANKS TO HIM...
...NO ONE ELSE WILL QUIT.

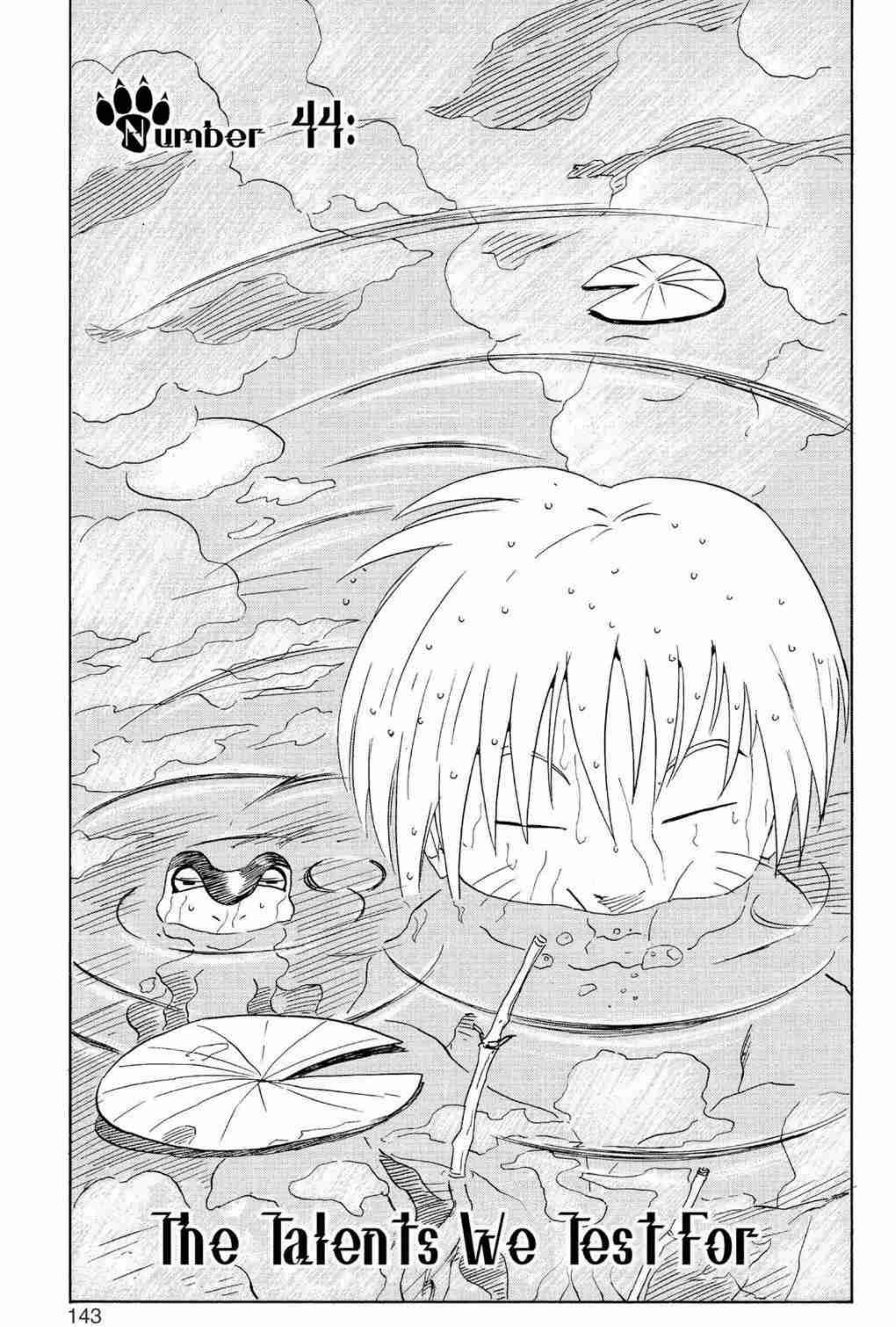
GULP!

GOOD CALL.
SO, EVERYONE WHO IS STILL HERE...

!!
HUNH?!!!


...YOU'VE JUST PASSED THE FIRST EXAM!!!

A FRIEND OF MINE DREW THIS PICTURE OF NARUTO FOR ME.


Number 44:
The Talents We Test For

!!!

...YOU'VE JUST PASSED THE FIRST EXAM.

SO...ALL SEVENTY-EIGHT OF YOU WHO ARE STILL HERE...

WHEN DID THAT HAPPEN?

WHAT ABOUT THE TENTH QUESTION?!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "PASSED"?

...

READ THIS WAY
...BEYOND THE WHOLE "ACCEPT OR REJECT" THING.
gr
in
THERE IS NO TENTH QUESTION...
THOSE QUESTIONS HAD A PURPOSE, WHICH THEY'VE ALREADY SERVED.
THERE WAS NO WASTE.
THAT WAS A TOTAL WASTE OF OUR TIME!
HEY! THEN WHY DID WE HAVE TO SUFFER THROUGH THE OTHER NINE QUESTIONS?!
HUNH?!!
!
HE SEEMS LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON.
?
...OUR SKILLS AT SPYING?
...AT SPYING!
OUR GOAL WAS TO TEST YOUR SKILLS...
!
SUCH AS?

...WOULD BRING YOUR TEAMMATES DOWN WITH YOU.
OH, I GET IT!
WITH THAT RULE, I PRESSURED YOU WITH THE FEAR THAT ANYTHING YOU DID WRONG...
YOU PASS OR FAIL AS PART OF A THREE-MAN CELL.
REMEMBER THE RULES AT THE BEGINNING?

TEE HEE...

YEP!

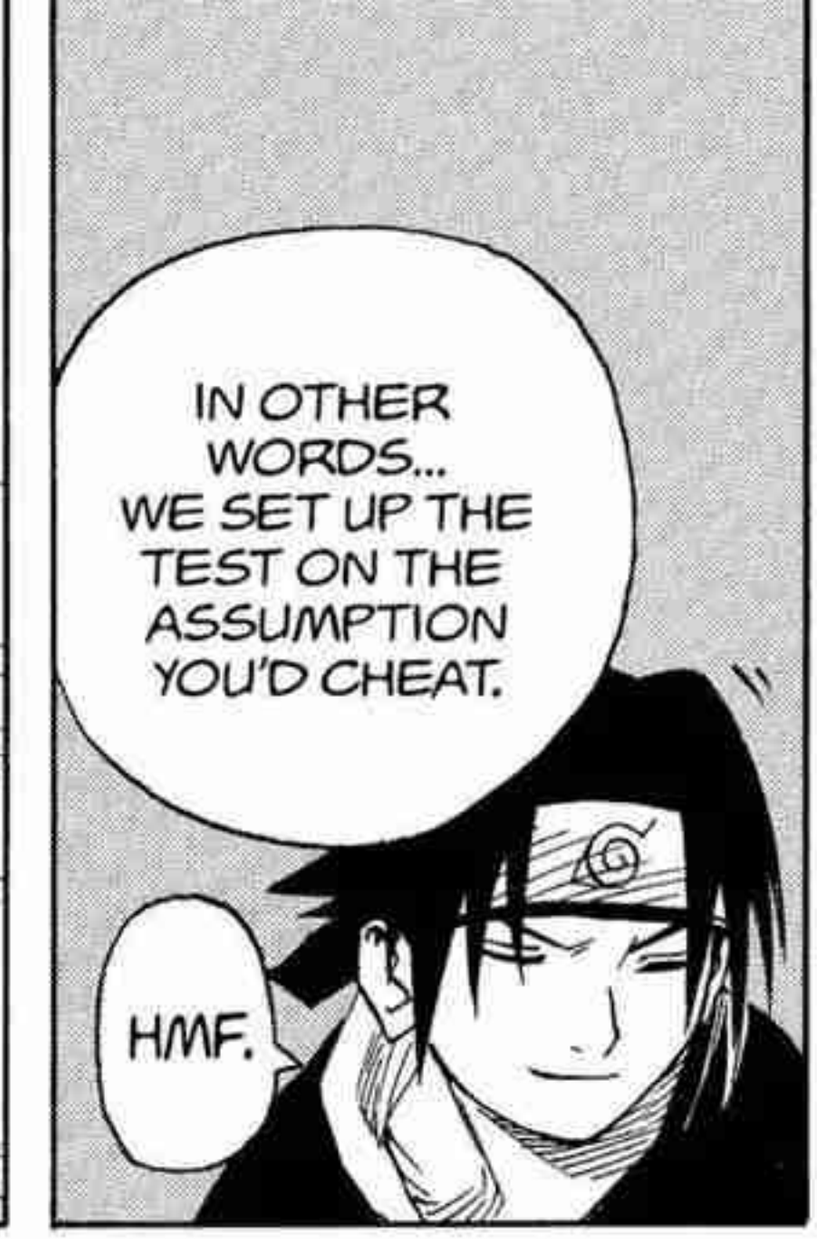
YOU ARE SO FULL OF IT!
YOU KNOW, I KINDA FIGURED THAT WAS IT.

...HAD ONLY ONE WAY OF RETAINING YOUR POINTS-- BY CHEATING.
...HAVING REACHED THAT SAME CONCLUSION...

SO MOST OF YOU...
HOWEVER... THE QUESTIONS ARE BEYOND THE LEVEL THAT JUNIOR NINJA COULD BE EXPECTED TO HANDLE.

...TWO JOURNEYMAN NINJA WHO ALREADY KNEW ALL THE ANSWERS.

AND, TO ENSURE THERE WOULD BE SUITABLE TARGETS FOR YOU TO CHEAT FROM, WE SNUCK IN A PAIR OF RINGERS...


IN OTHER WORDS... WE SET UP THE TEST ON THE ASSUMPTION YOU'D CHEAT.
HMF.

D'OH!
...
OH, YEAH. ME TOO.
IT TOOK ME FOREVER TO FIGURE OUT WHO THEY WERE!

WHAT?
!
AW, MAN!!!

ANY IDIOT COULD TELL!

NA HA HA HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA! YEAH! IT WAS OBVIOUS!!!!

FWUP

...FAILED.
!
RUSTLE RUSTLE
OF COURSE, ANYONE WHO CHEATED IN A CLUMSY OR OBVIOUS WAY....

THAT FOOL... HE HAD NO IDEA.
RIGHT, HINATA?
R-RIGHT...

ON

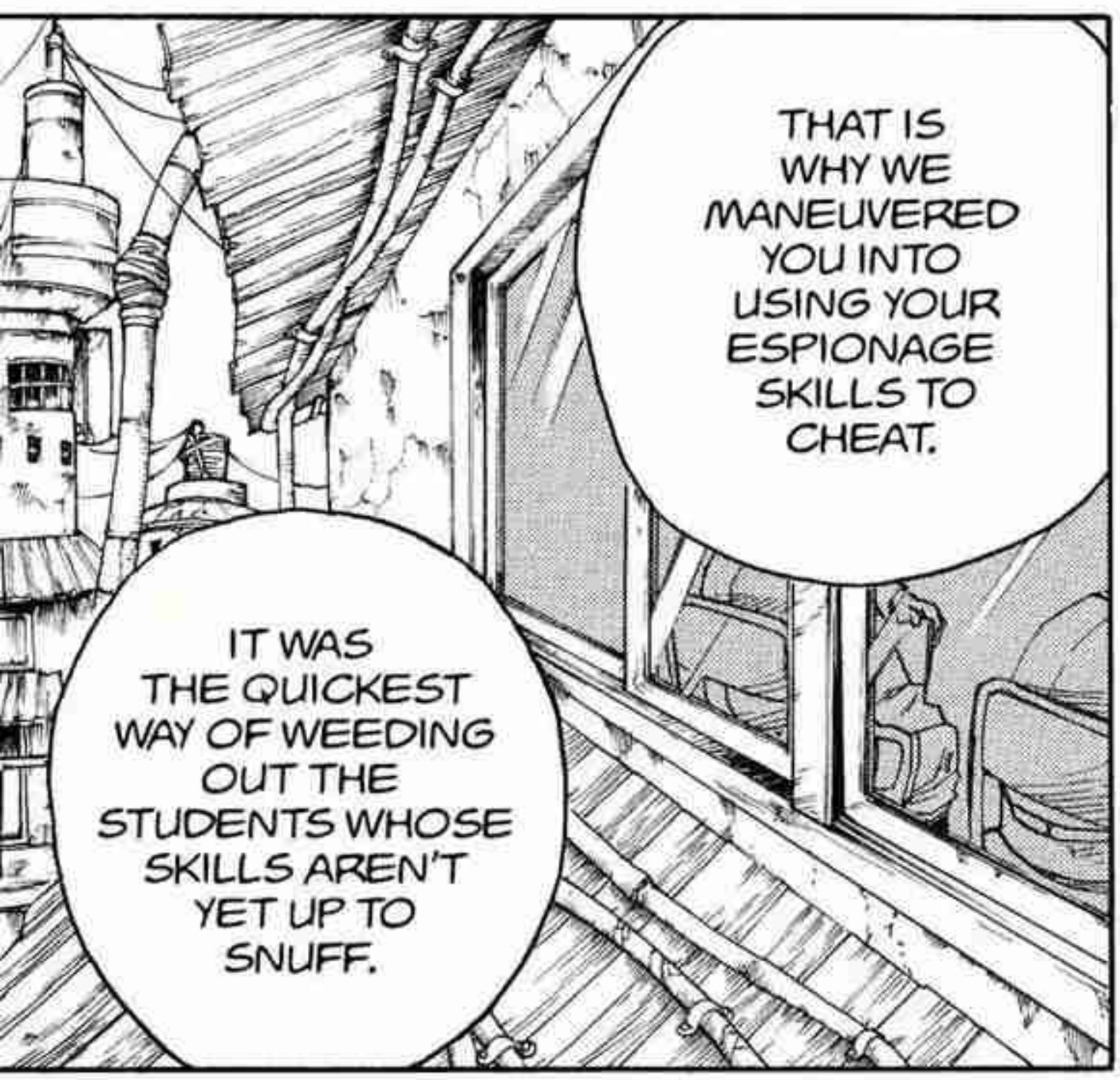
BECAUSE THERE MAY BE CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE BEING CAUGHT IN AN ACT OF ESPIONAGE CAN COST YOU MORE THAN JUST YOUR LIFE.

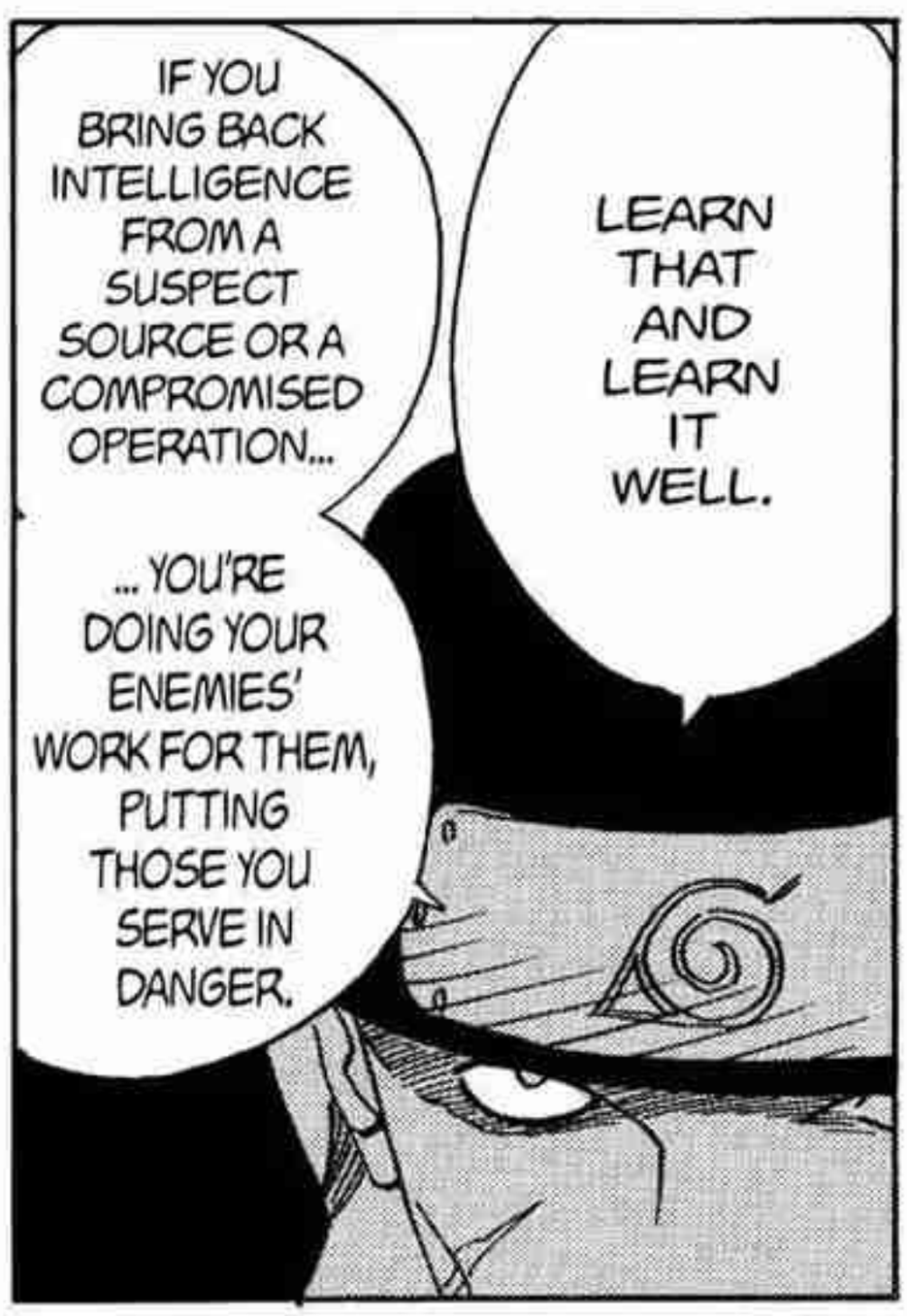
YOU PAY IN WAYS THAT CAN BE TAKEN FROM YOU LITTLE BY LITTLE, TIME AND TIME AGAIN, WHEN MANY LIVES HANG IN THE BALANCE.

RUSTLE
RUSTLE

...IF YOU CAN'T KEEP YOUR PRESENCE SECRET FROM THE ENEMY.

THE INFORMATION YOU OBTAIN CAN'T BE TRUSTED...



...WAS THE FIRST REAL TEST ON THE EXAM.

AH! THE TENTH QUESTION...

THE TENTH QUESTION...

...WAS A CHOICE BETWEEN TWO OPTIONS...

LET ME EXPLAIN...

WHAT ON EARTH DO YOU MEAN?

...

?

IT WAS A NASTY, UNFAIR, NO-WIN SET OF OPTIONS.

... LOST ANY CHANCE OF EVER EVEN TRYING AGAIN.

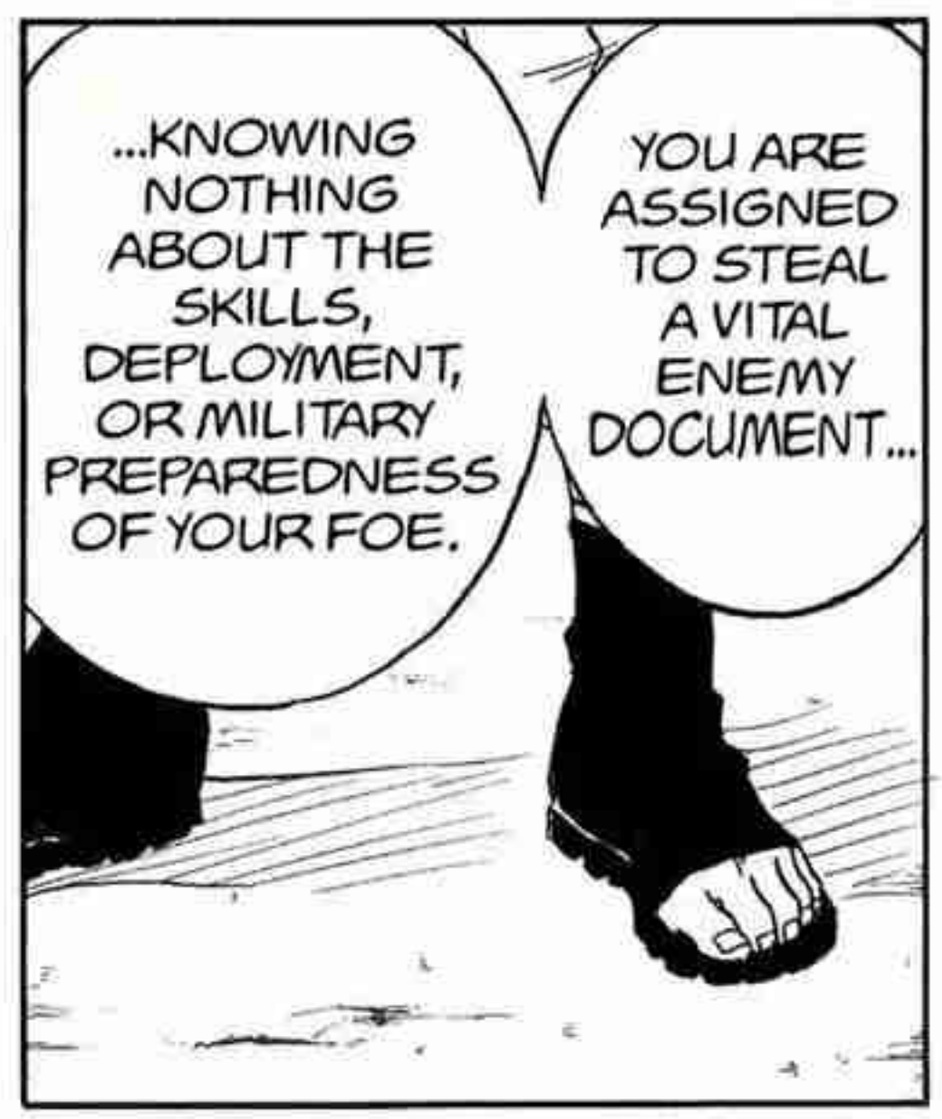
THOSE WHO CHOSE TO REJECT WERE FAILED, AND THEIR FRIENDS ALONG WITH THEM. THOSE WHO CHOSE TO ACCEPT AND COULDN'T ANSWER THE QUESTION...

...THAT WERE BOTH DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS.

LET'S SUPPOSE YOU ALL GO ON TO SUCCESSFULLY ATTAIN THE RANK OF CHÛNIN.
SO WHY DID I PRESENT THEM?

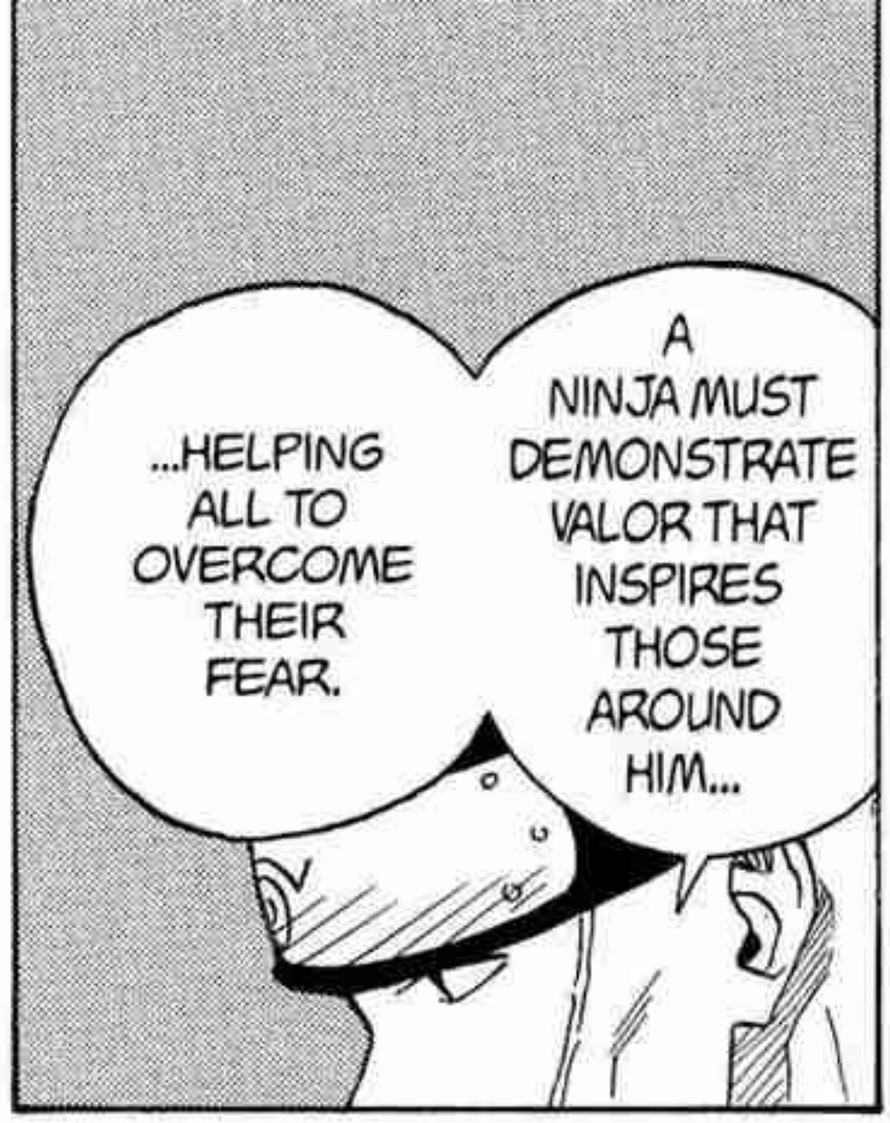
...

NOW... DO YOU ACCEPT YOUR MISSION? OR DO YOU REJECT IT...
YOU MAY HAVE TO CROSS A TERRITORY THAT HAS BEEN HEAVILY MINED AND SET WITH TRAPS.


...KNOWING NOTHING ABOUT THE SKILLS, DEPLOYMENT, OR MILITARY PREPAREDNESS OF YOUR FOE.
YOU ARE ASSIGNED TO STEAL A VITAL ENEMY DOCUMENT...

OF COURSE NOT!

COULD ANY CHÛNIN GET AWAY WITH ONLY TAKING ON THE SAFE JOBS?
...RATHER THAN PLACE YOUR OWN LIFE--OR THE LIVES OF YOUR COMPANIONS--IN JEOPARDY?
...


...HELPING ALL TO OVERCOME THEIR FEAR.
A NINJA MUST DEMONSTRATE VALOR THAT INSPIRES THOSE AROUND HIM...

...THERE WILL BE MISSIONS THAT YOU CANNOT DECLINE.
NO MATTER HOW DANGEROUS THE RISK...

THIS IS THE TALENT THAT WE MOST VALUE IN THE COMMANDER OF A CHÛNIN CELL!

IN MY OPINION, THEY DON'T BELONG IN THE RANKS OF THE CHÛNIN AT ALL!
...ARE WEAKLINGS WHO MAKE ONLY WEAK AND EASY DECISIONS.

...WHO WOULD TRADE TODAY'S CERTAIN RISK FOR TOMORROW'S UNCERTAIN FUTURE...
THOSE WHO CAN'T GAMBLE WITH THEIR OWN FATE...

... NEVER TAKING THE CHANCE THAT LIES BEFORE THEM...

THUMP

THUMPITY

IF YOU KEEP THAT SPIRIT, YOU CAN PROBABLY CONQUER ALL OF THE MANY DOUBTS AND DIFFICULTIES YOU'LL FACE.

...YOU ANSWERED THE ALMOST-INSOLUBLE TENTH QUESTION CORRECTLY.

I DON'T QUIT, AND I WON'T LOSE!

UNDERESTIMATE ME!!!

BY CHOOSING TO ACCEPT...

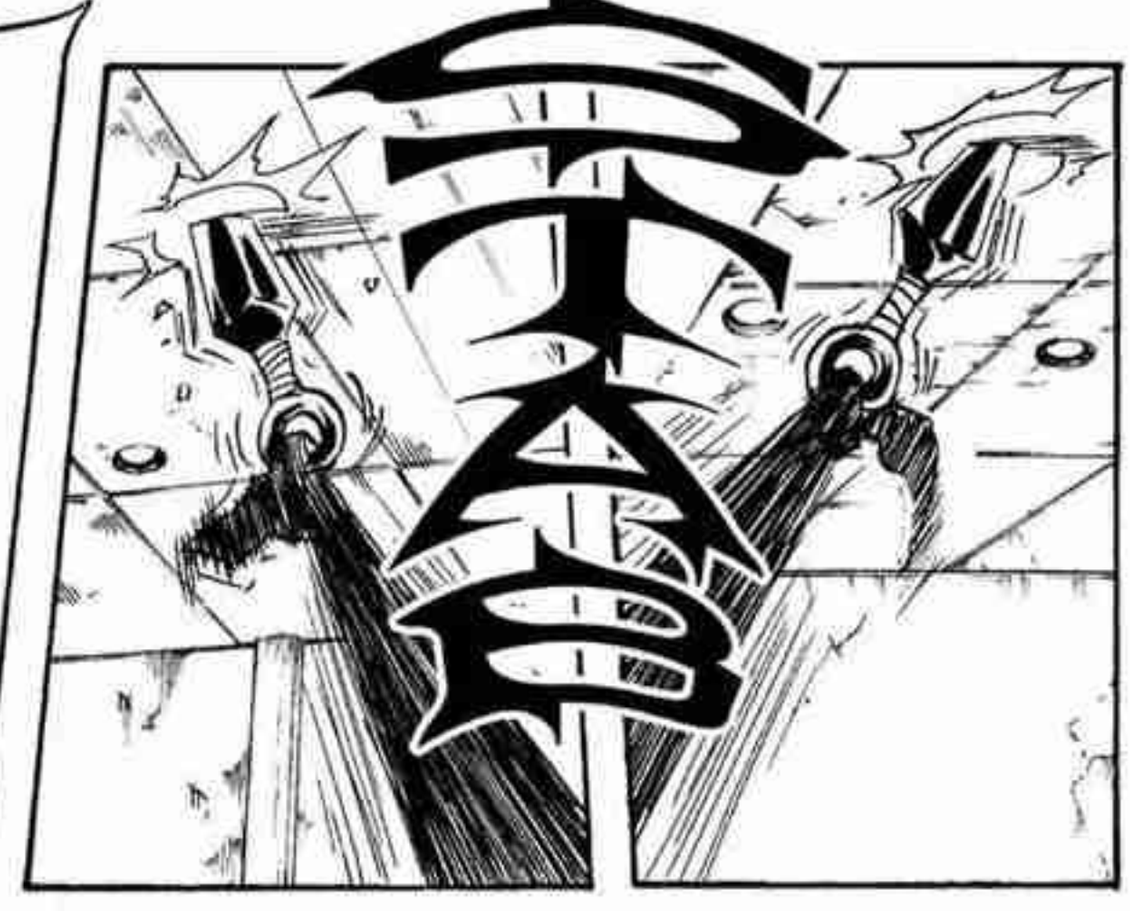
I'LL PRAY YOU FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT!

YOU'VE PASSED THE FIRST HURDLE. PART ONE OF THE *CHÛNIN* SELECTION EXAM IS NOW CONCLUDED.

!!
SHUK
!!
WHA-?!!
SHUK

CLAP
SHHHMMM

WH-
WHAT
THE--


宗

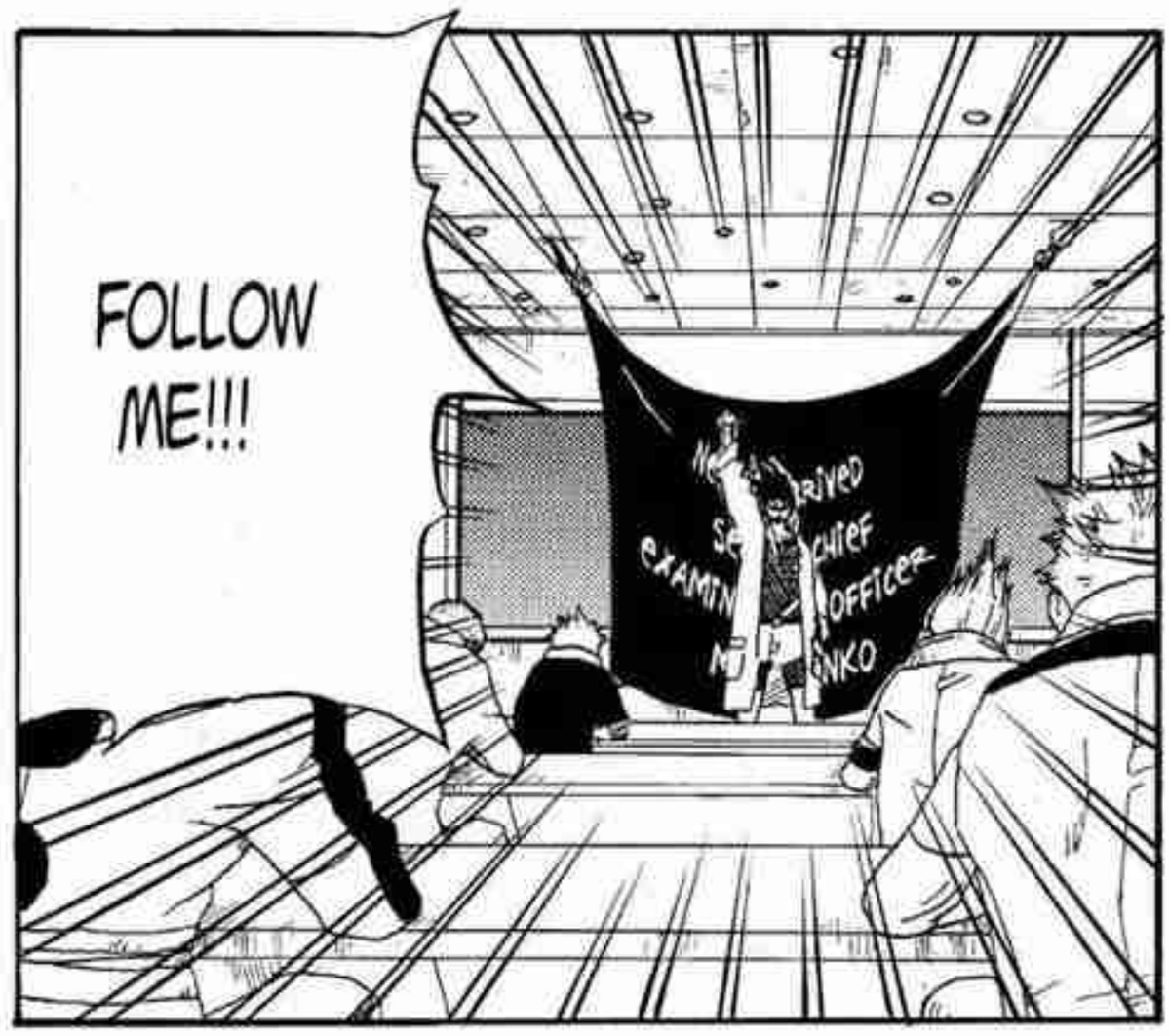
HER...
NOW?
OH,
SPARE
ME...
SIGH
SHN

ONNNNG
NEWLY ARRIVED SECOND CHIEF OFFICER
NONE OF YOU ARE IN ANY POSITION TO CELEBRATE.

...MITARASHI ANKO!!

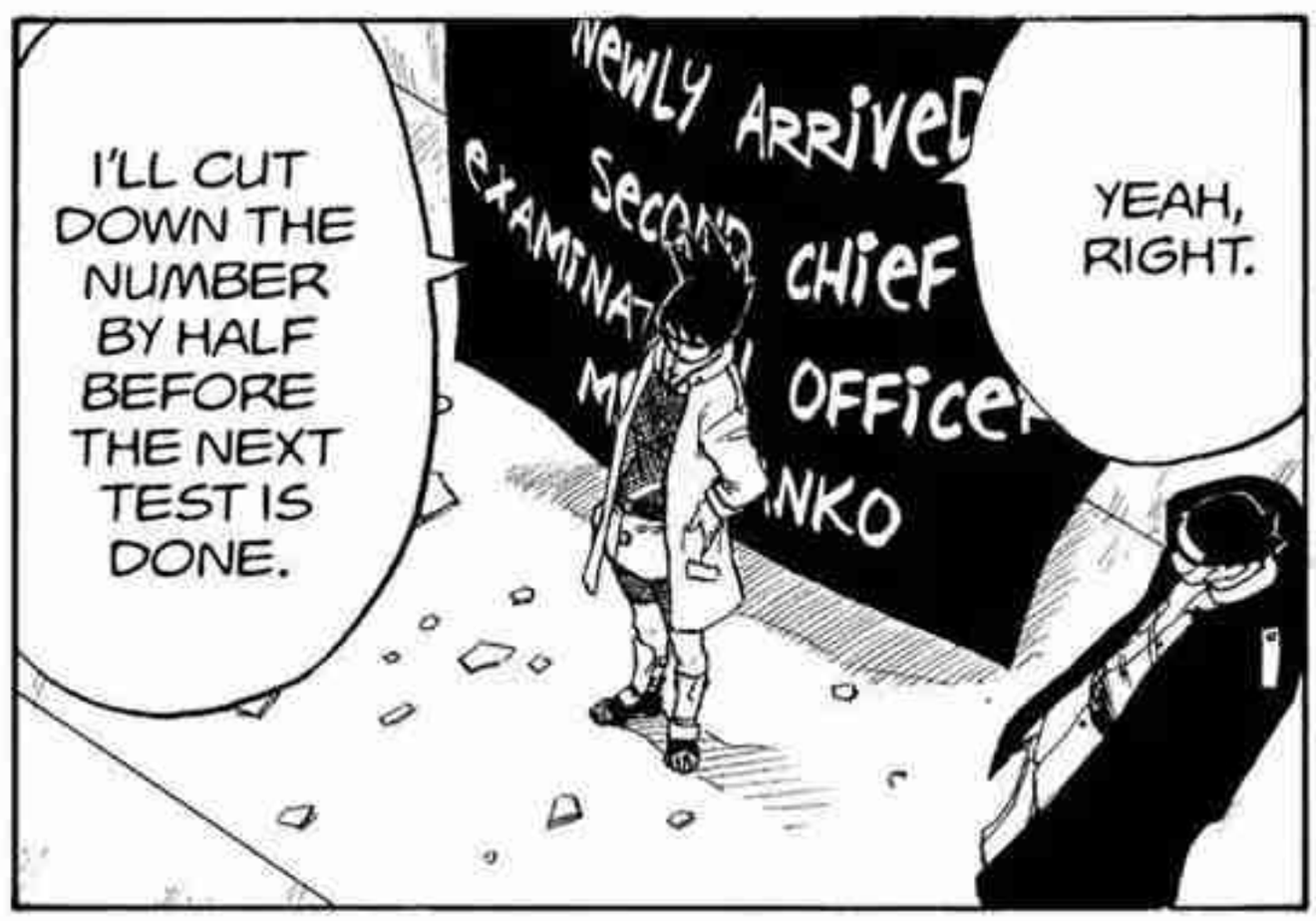
TIME'S A-WASTIN', PEOPLE. LET'S GO!!

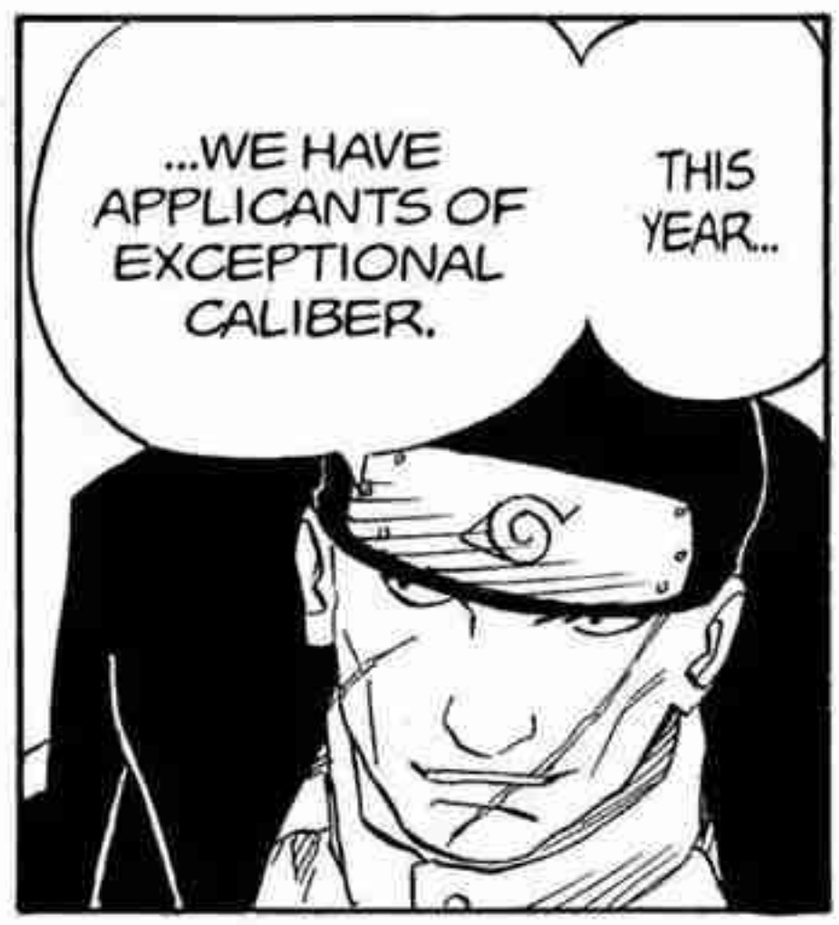
I AM THE SECOND CHIEF EXAMINATION OFFICER...

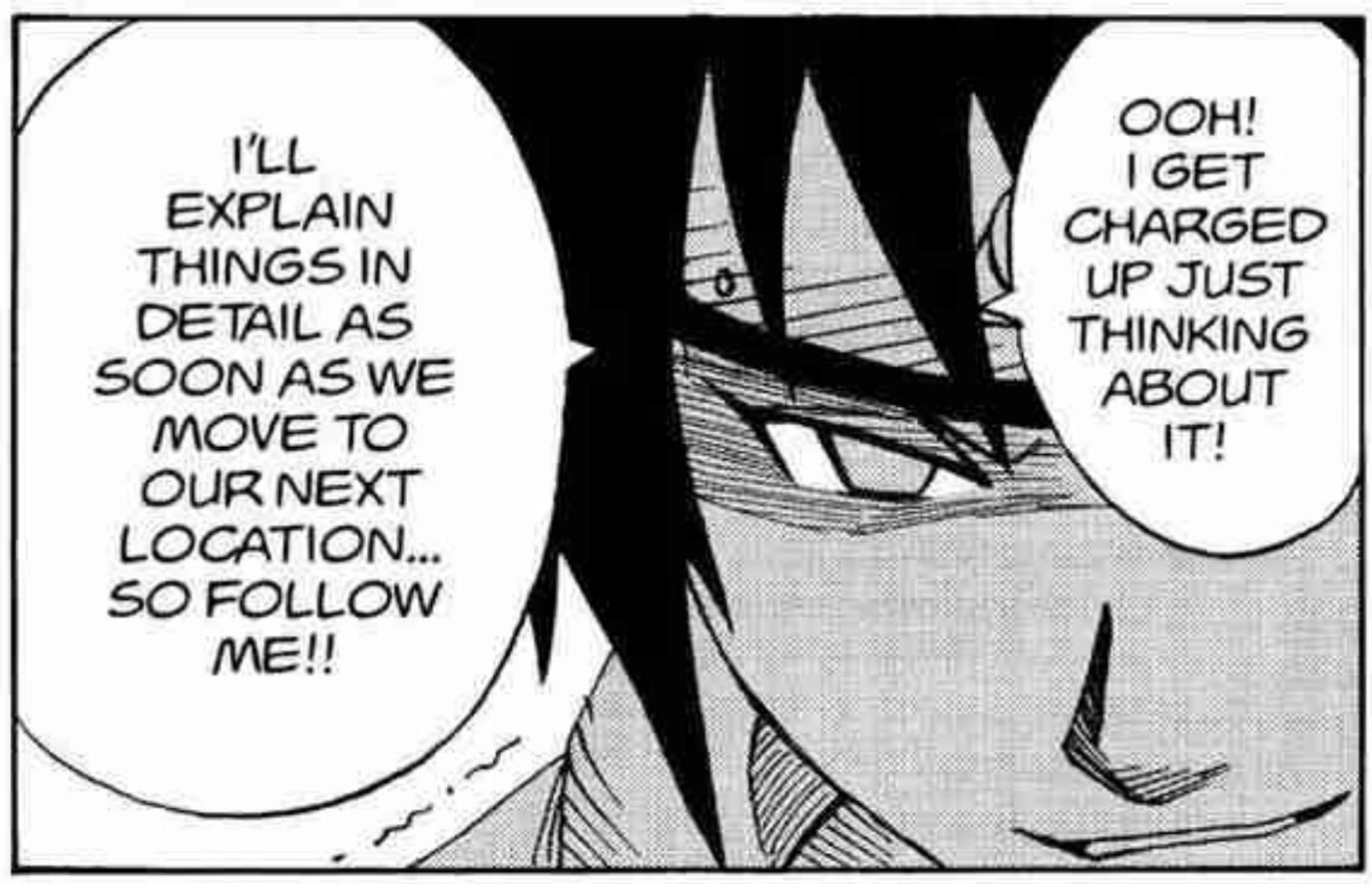


OBVIOUSLY YOU WENT WAY TOO EASY ON THEM.

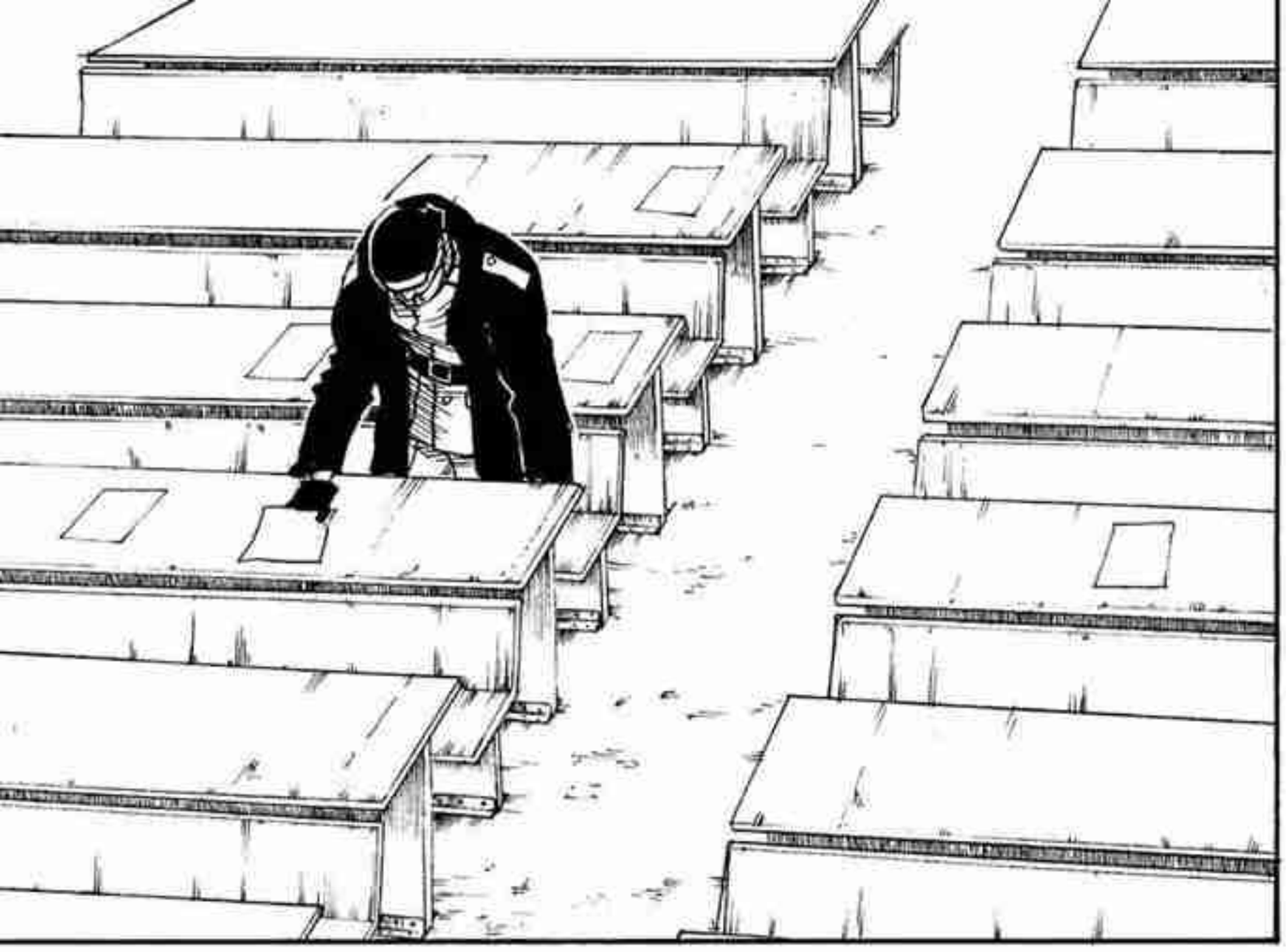
SEVENTY-EIGHT OF YOU ARE STILL HERE?!
IBIKI! YOU PASSED TWENTY-SIX TEAMS?!

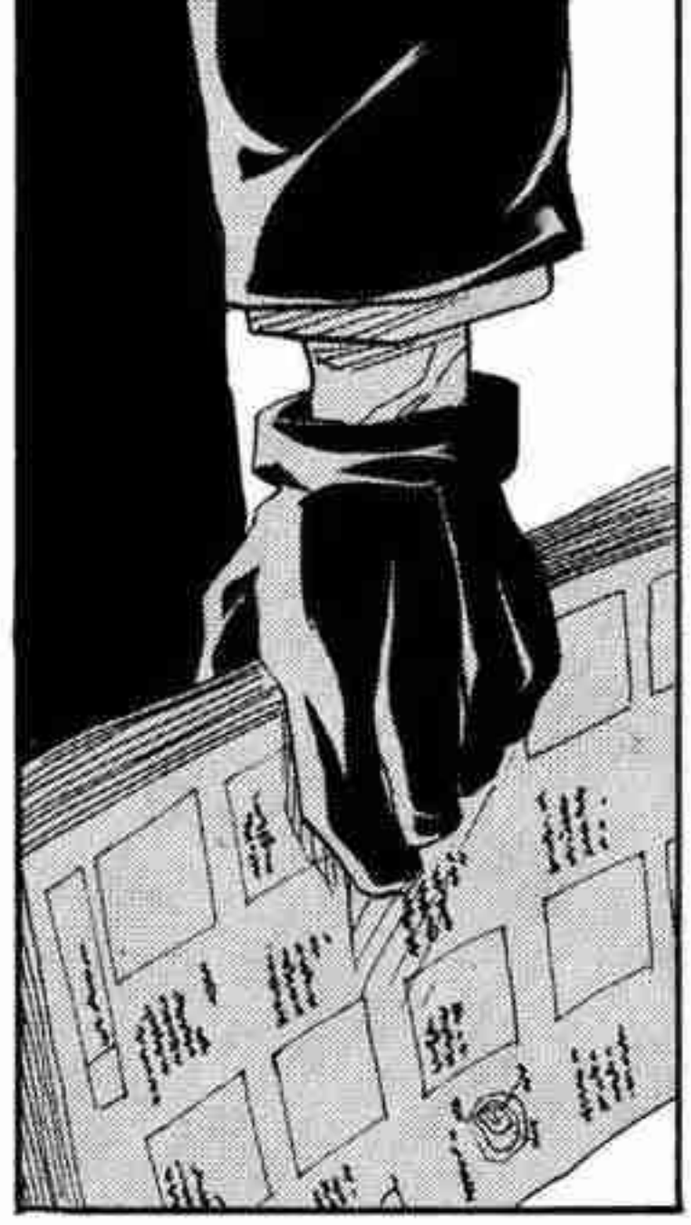

I'LL CUT DOWN THE NUMBER BY HALF BEFORE THE NEXT TEST IS DONE.
NEWLY ARRIVED
SECOND CHIEF OFFICER
YEAH, RIGHT.

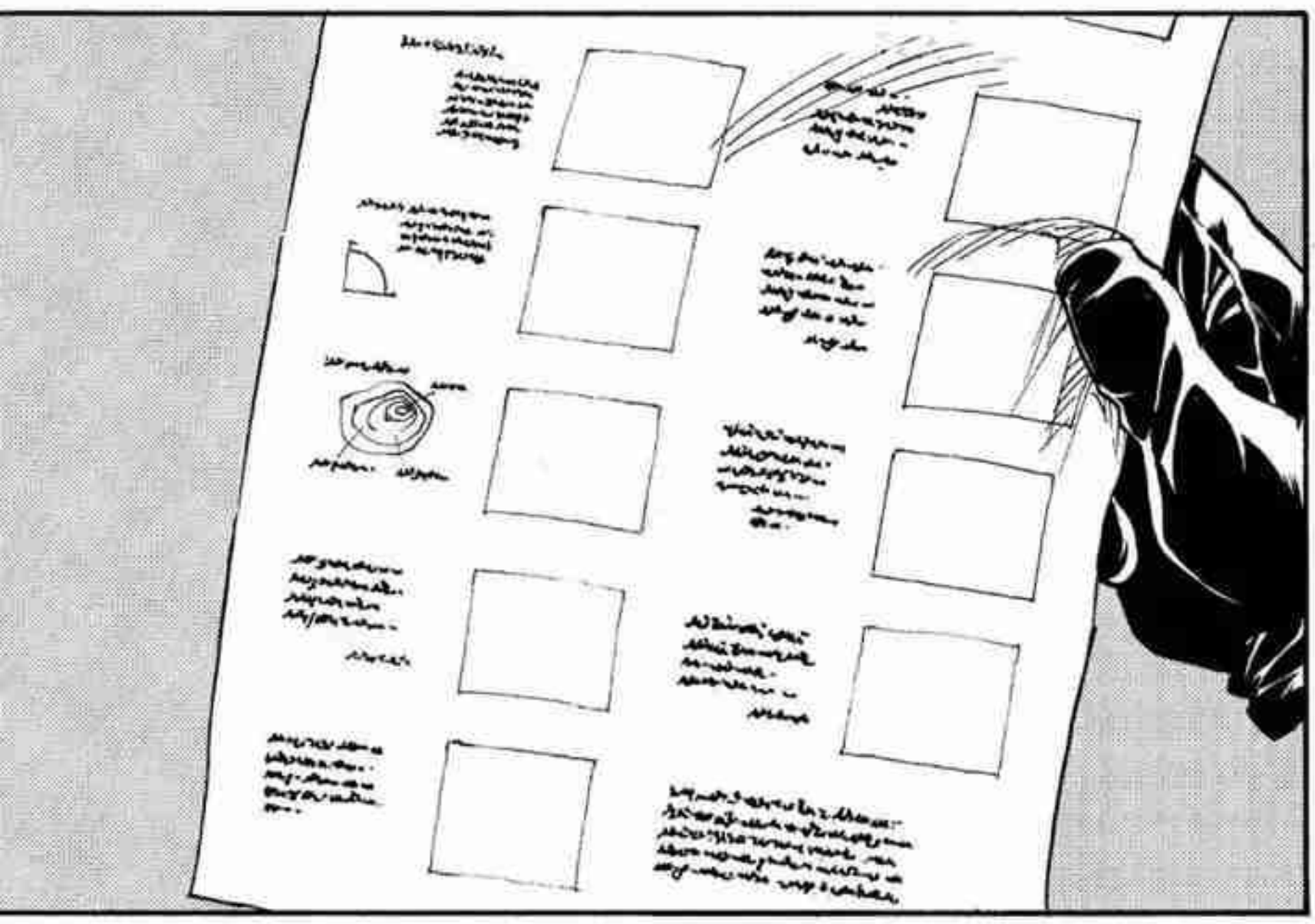

...WE HAVE APPLICANTS OF EXCEPTIONAL CALIBER.
THIS YEAR...


I'LL EXPLAIN THINGS IN DETAIL AS SOON AS WE MOVE TO OUR NEXT LOCATION... SO FOLLOW ME!!
OOH! I GET CHARGED UP JUST THINKING ABOUT IT!

CUT US DOWN...
BY HALF?!
!!







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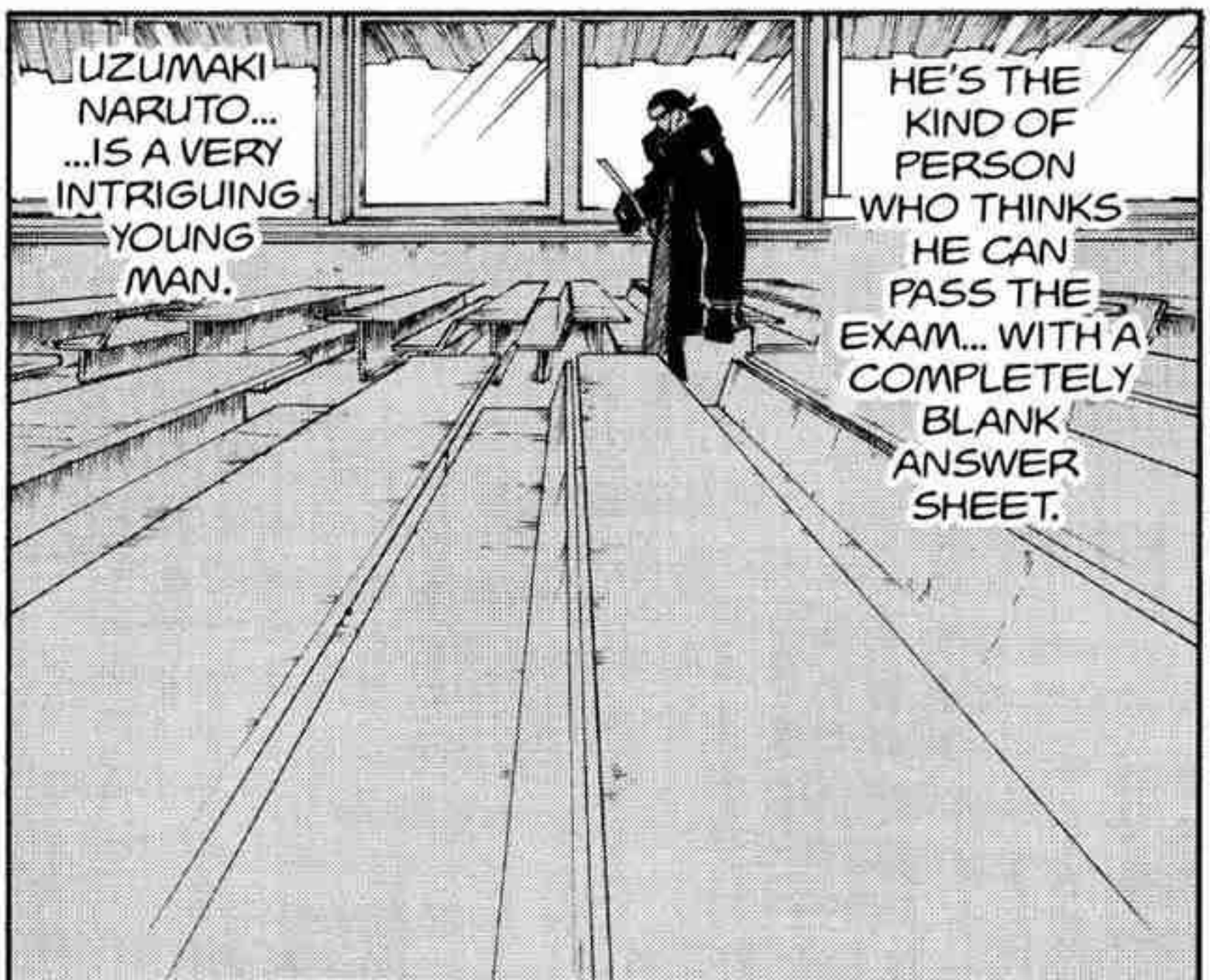
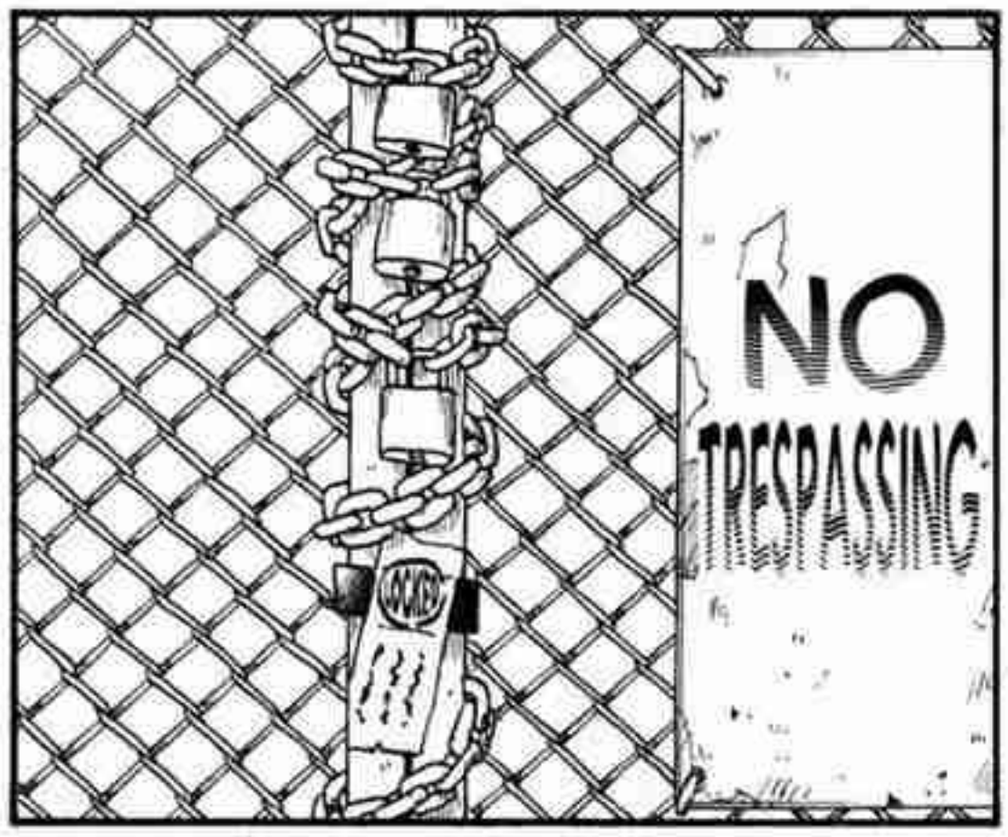
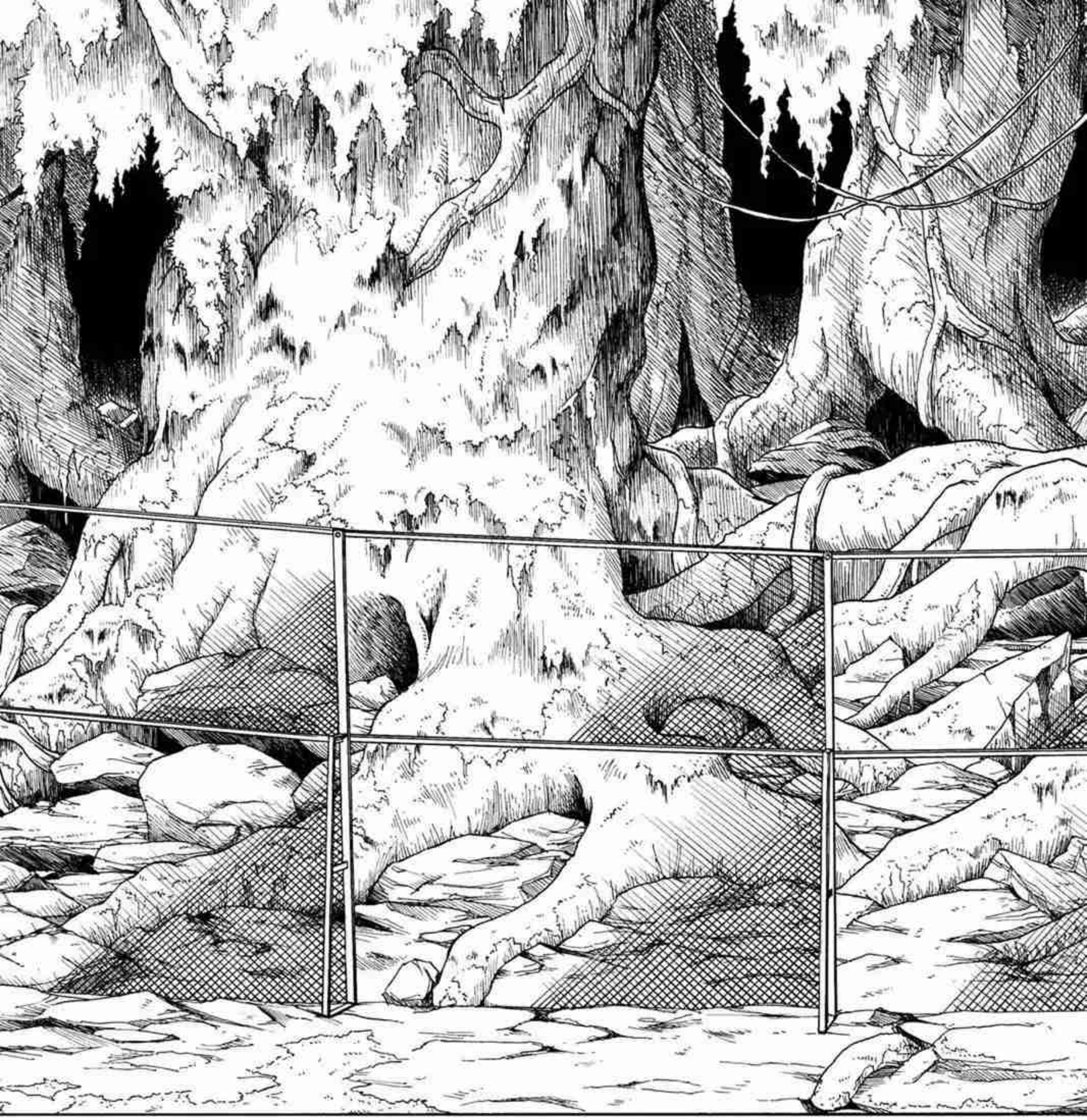

UZUMAKI NARUTO... ...IS A VERY INTRIGUING YOUNG MAN.
HE'S THE KIND OF PERSON WHO THINKS HE CAN PASS THE EXAM... WITH A COMPLETELY BLANK ANSWER SHEET.

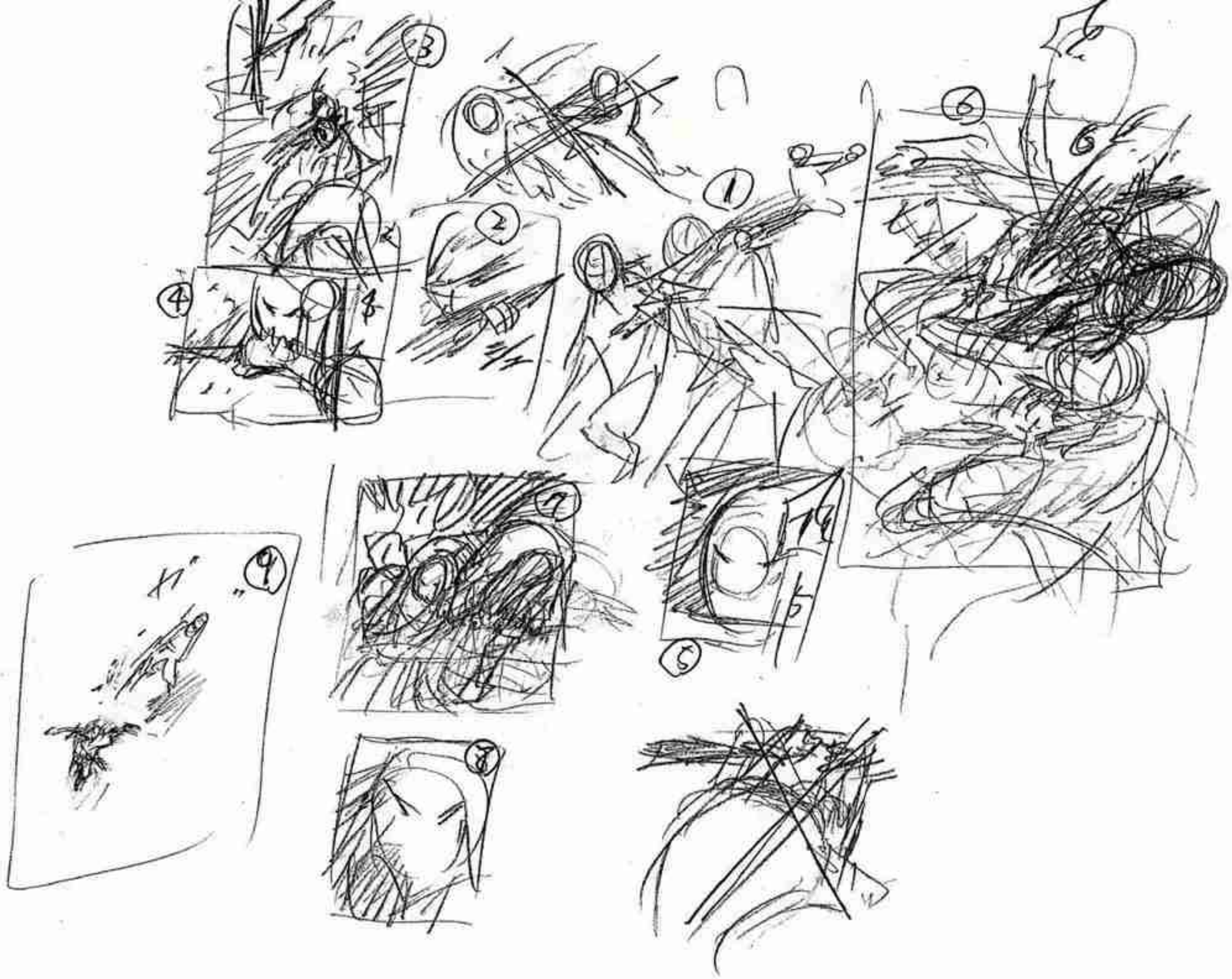
HUH.


NO
TRESPASSING

GULP



ALSO KNOWN AS... THE FOREST OF DEATH!!
THIS IS THE ARENA FOR THE SECOND EXAM: TRAINING GROUND 44.



## KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S "I ONLY SHOW YOU THESE THINGS SO YOU'LL UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH I LOVE MANGA" REJECTS CORNER...

THE ROUGH SKETCHES ABOVE SHOW HOW I LAY OUT THE VISUAL FLOW OF AN ACTION SEQUENCE. I TRY TO BE VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE FLOW OF SCENES IN NARUTO, SO AS SOON AS I COME UP WITH AN IDEA FOR AN ACTION SEQUENCE, I CHOREOGRAPH IT IN A SET OF THUMBNAIL DRAWINGS, LIKE STORYBOARDS. I TRY TO KEEP THE OVERALL PAGE COUNT FOR THE CHAPTER IN MIND, BUT THINGS USUALLY KEEP EXPANDING AND OPENING OUT, TAKING UP MORE AND MORE PAGES, WHILE I WORK OUT THE BEST CAMERA ANGLES, WITHOUT EVEN A THOUGHT TO WHERE THE DIALOGUE WILL FALL. NEXT I NUMBER THE SKETCHES, FIGURE OUT WHICH SCENES ARE THE MOST CRUCIAL, MAKE SURE THE TWO-PAGE SPREADS WILL ACTUALLY LAND ON PAGES THAT FACE EACH OTHER... AND THEN I NUMBER THE PAGES AND BREAK THEM DOWN INTO PANELS. THEN I DISCOVER I'VE USED UP MORE PAGES THAN I'M SUPPOSED TO HAVE IN THE ENTIRE CHAPTER... WHICH MEANS I HAVE TO GO BACK AND CUT SEQUENCES AND ERASE THINGS... CRYING LIKE A BABY ALL THE WHILE. YOU KNOW...

IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME...

THIS MAY BE WHY MY SCRIPTS ARE ALWAYS SO LATE!

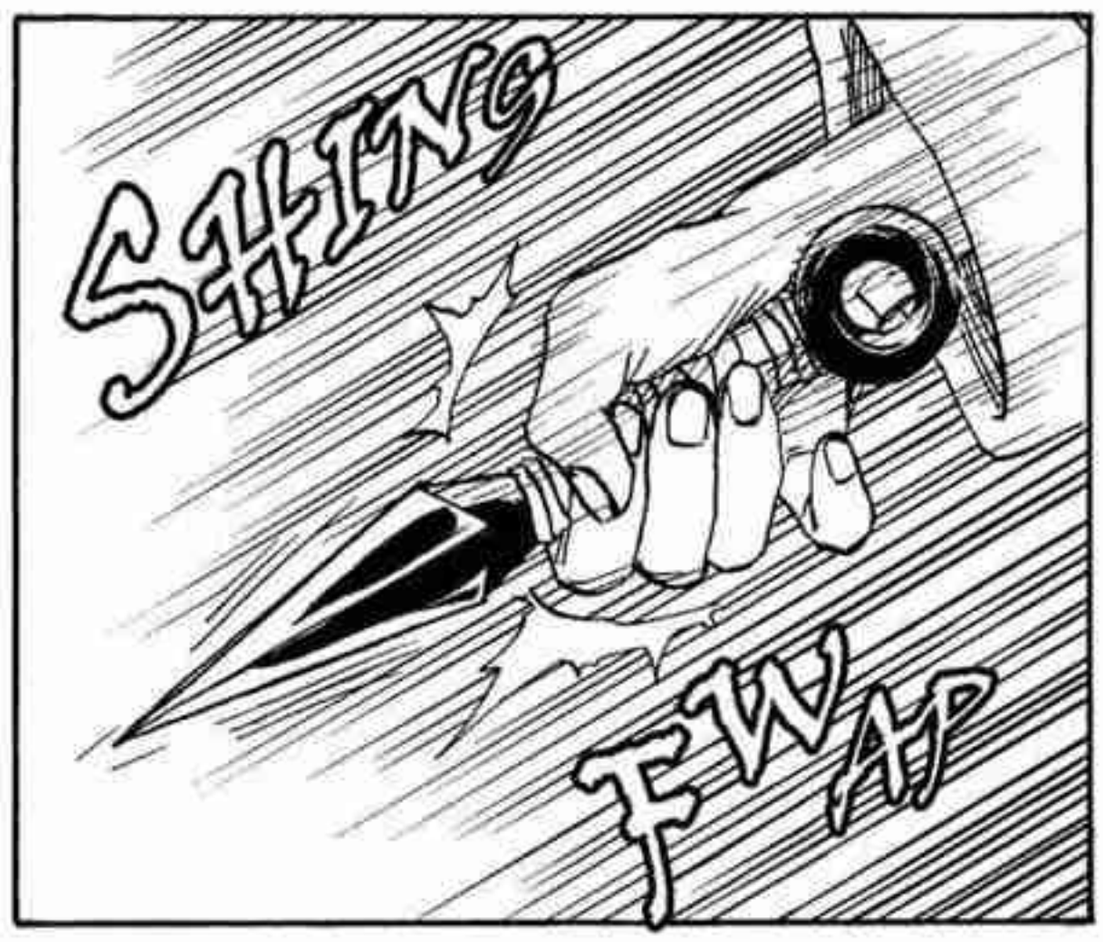
# Number 45: The Second Exam

...WHY THEY CALL THIS THE "FOREST OF DEATH"!

YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT FIRSTHAND...

YOU'RE TRYING TO PSYCH US OUT, AND I'M NOT GONNA FALL FOR IT!!

LIKE THAT'S REALLY GONNA SCARE US.



TAK

!

SHF

HEH. YOUR KIND ARE ALWAYS THE FIRST TO GO.

SHM

!!

SLICE

!!

SWI

PE

SPILLING ALL THAT RICH, RED, LOVELY, LUSCIOUS BLOOD...

PLIT

LAP...

I BELIEVE YOU DROPPED IT.
YOUR KUNAI KNIFE...
SHLUGk
GEE... THANKS.

READ THIS WAY
SLUP
...UNLESS YOU'RE IN A HURRY TO DIE.
SLUP
SMEK
DON'T JUST STAND BEHIND ME...
...RADIATING BLOODLUST...
...
N-NARUTO...
...AND I WAS ALREADY REVVED UP... FROM LOSING A STRAND OF MY PRECIOUS HAIR.
I'LL TRY TO KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL... BUT THE SIGHT OF WARM, FRESH BLOOD REALLY MAKES ME CRAZY...
SHLUGK
WE'VE GOT A REAL NUT-CASE PROCTORING THIS EXAM!
NOT GOOD. NOT GOOD AT ALL.

SORRY ABOUT THAT.

AND THIS OTHER GUY...

WHAT'S UP WITH THE BIG, FREAKISH TONGUE?

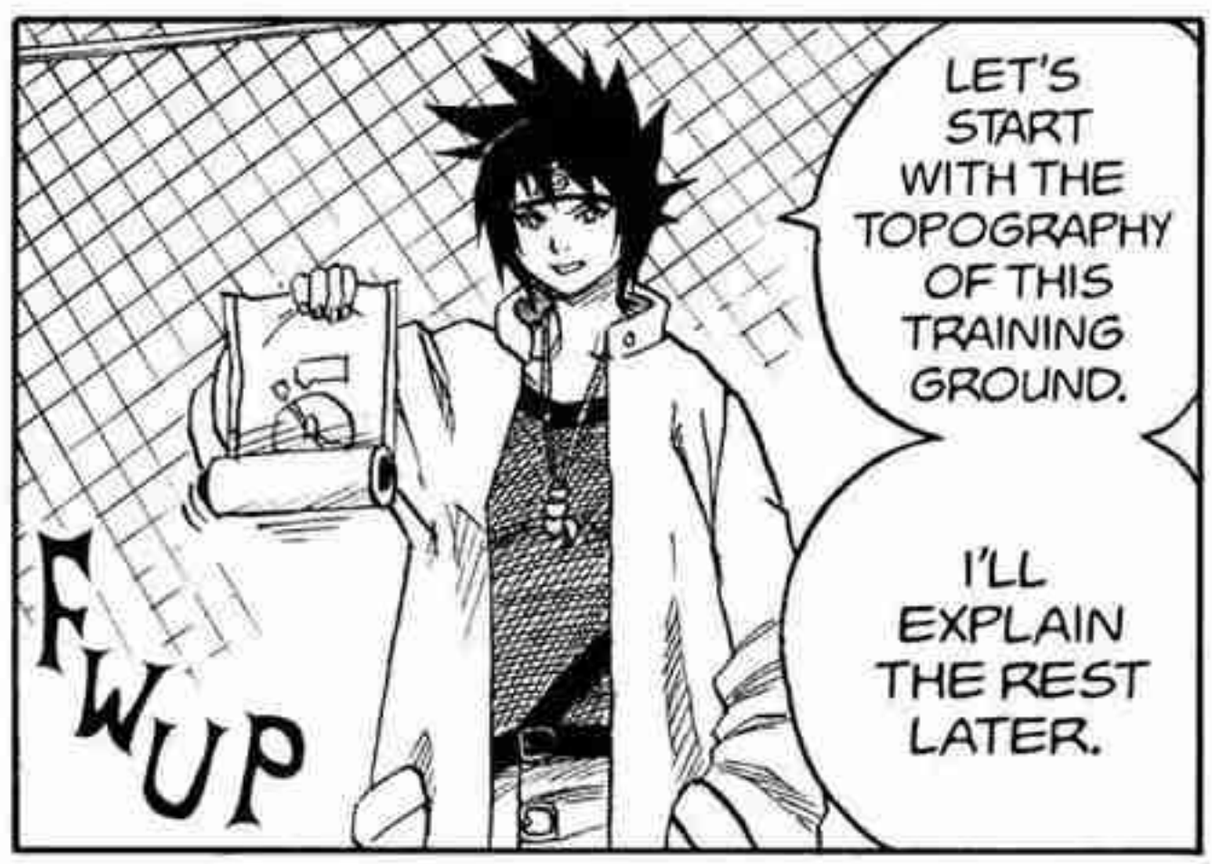
SHHF

* THE CHARACTER ON THE LOINCLOTH READS "CRIME."

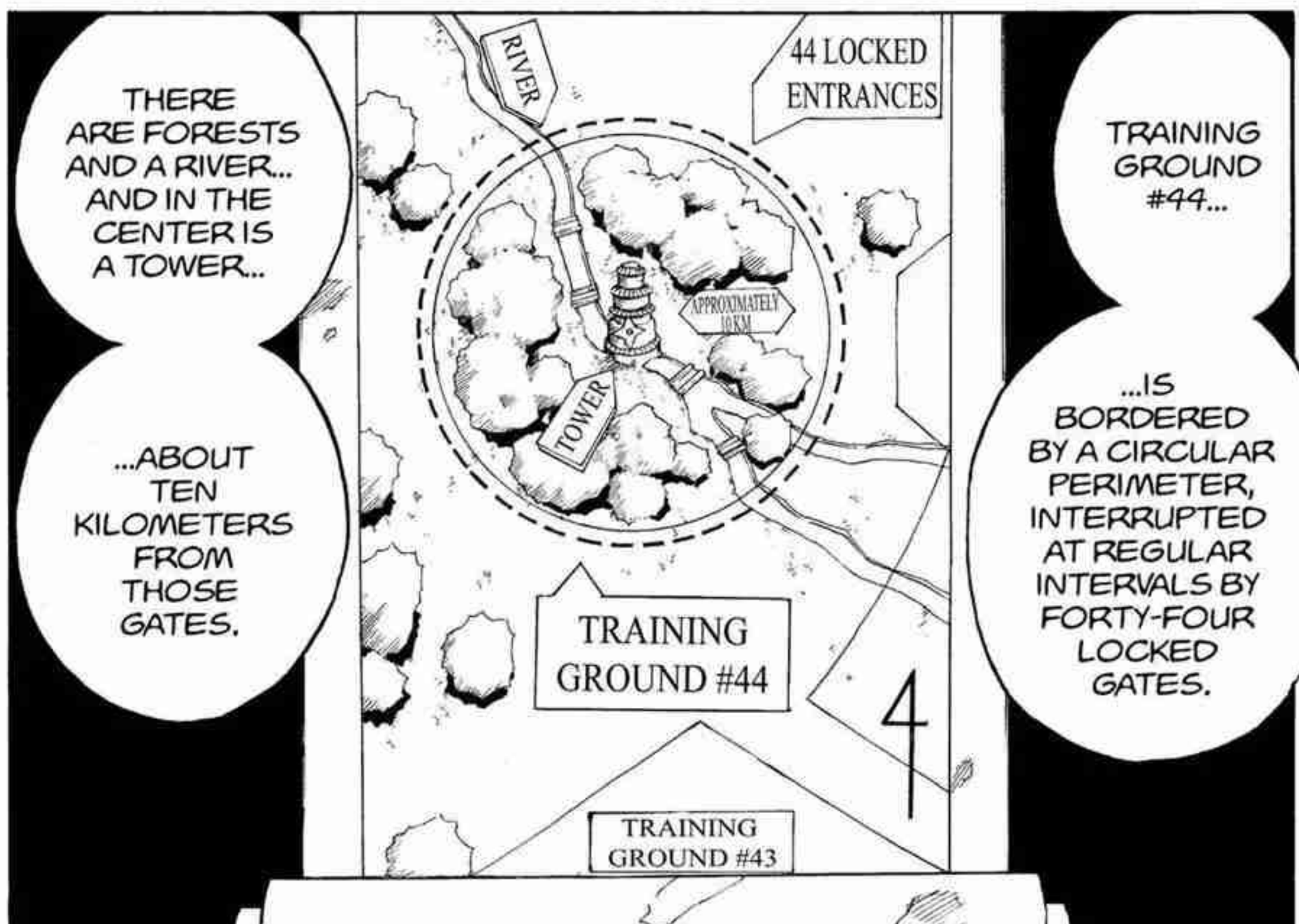
READ THIS WAY
...WHY?
THEY'RE CONSENT FORMS. EVERYBODY HAS TO SIGN ONE.
?
!
SIGN BEFORE YOU GO IN, SO WE CAN'T BE HELD LIABLE.
YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO GET IN TROUBLE, WOULD YOU? ♡
HA
HA
HA!
WE WANT ALL THE DETAILS COVERED BEFORE THE FIRST DEATHS OCCUR.
WITH THE OTHER TWO MEMBERS OF YOUR CELL, BRING THE FORMS TO THE HUT BEHIND YOU AND SUBMIT THEM.
FIRST, I'LL EXPLAIN WHAT THE SECOND EXAM ENTAILS.
THEN YOU CAN SIGN THE FORMS.

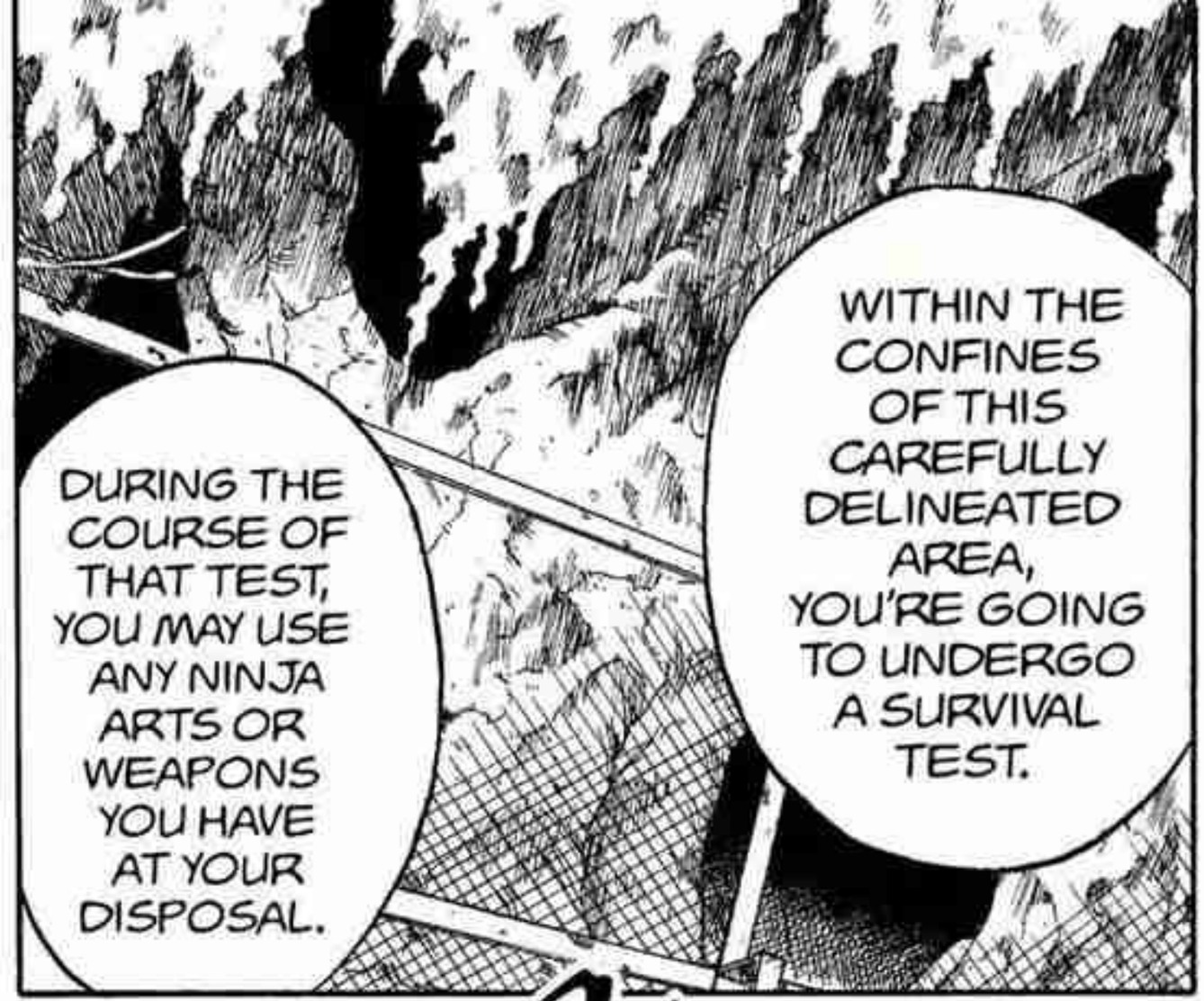
!
...IT'S A NO-HOLDS-BARRED SURVIVAL TEST.

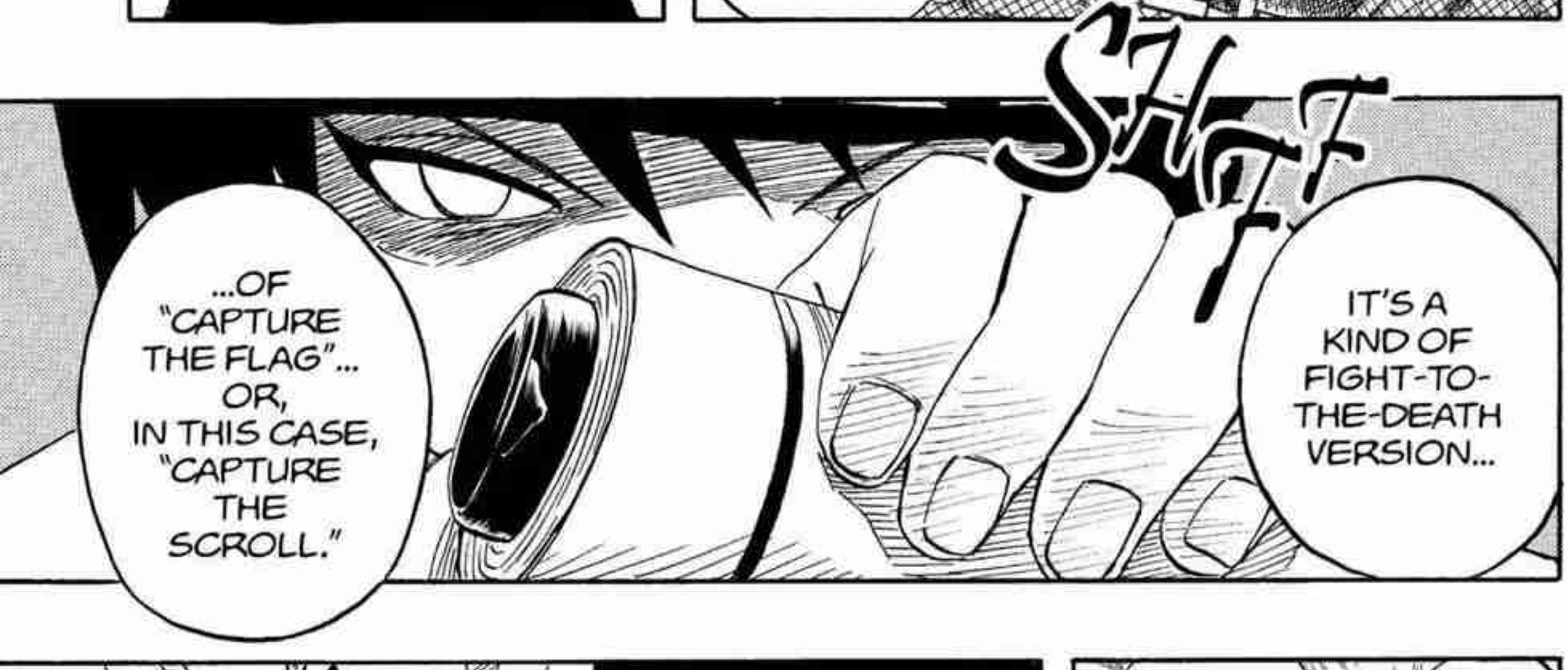
TO PUT IT SIMPLY...
NOW, ABOUT THE EXAM.
GOT THAT?


LET'S START WITH THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THIS TRAINING GROUND.
I'LL EXPLAIN THE REST LATER.
FWUP

ANOTHER PAIN-IN-THE-NECK EXAM! BLEAH!
SURVIVAL, EH?
FLAP


THERE ARE FORESTS AND A RIVER... AND IN THE CENTER IS A TOWER...
...ABOUT TEN KILOMETERS FROM THOSE GATES.
RIVER
44 LOCKED ENTRANCES
APPROXIMATELY 10 KM
TOWER
TRAINING GROUND #44
TRAINING GROUND #43
TRAINING GROUND #44...
...IS BORDERED BY A CIRCULAR PERIMETER, INTERRUPTED AT REGULAR INTERVALS BY FORTY-FOUR LOCKED GATES.


DURING THE COURSE OF THAT TEST, YOU MAY USE ANY NINJA ARTS OR WEAPONS YOU HAVE AT YOUR DISPOSAL.
WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THIS CAREFULLY DELINEATED AREA, YOU'RE GOING TO UNDERGO A SURVIVAL TEST.


SHIFF
...OF "CAPTURE THE FLAG"... OR, IN THIS CASE, "CAPTURE THE SCROLL."
IT'S A KIND OF FIGHT-TO-THE-DEATH VERSION...

THERE'S A "SCROLL OF HEAVEN" AND A "SCROLL OF EARTH" ...AND YOUR OBJECTIVE IS TO ACQUIRE BOTH SCROLLS.
天
地

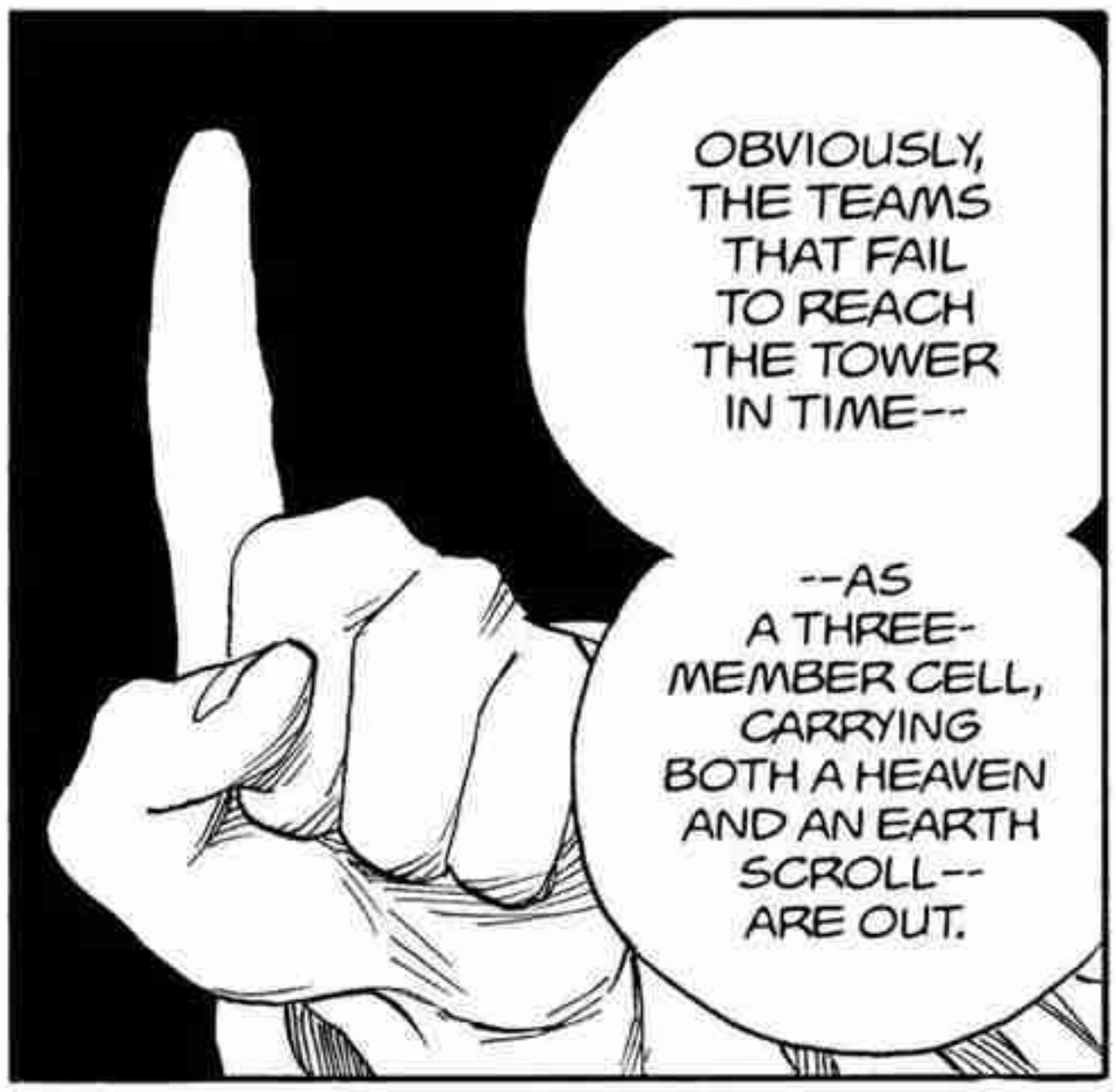
SCROLL?
EXACTLY!

*THIS SCROLL READS *TEN*, MEANING "HEAVEN."

*THIS SCROLL READS *CHI*, MEANING "EARTH."

...SOME OF YOU ARE BOUND TO SUCCUMB TO EXHAUSTION, EXPOSURE, STARVATION, AND DEHYDRATION.

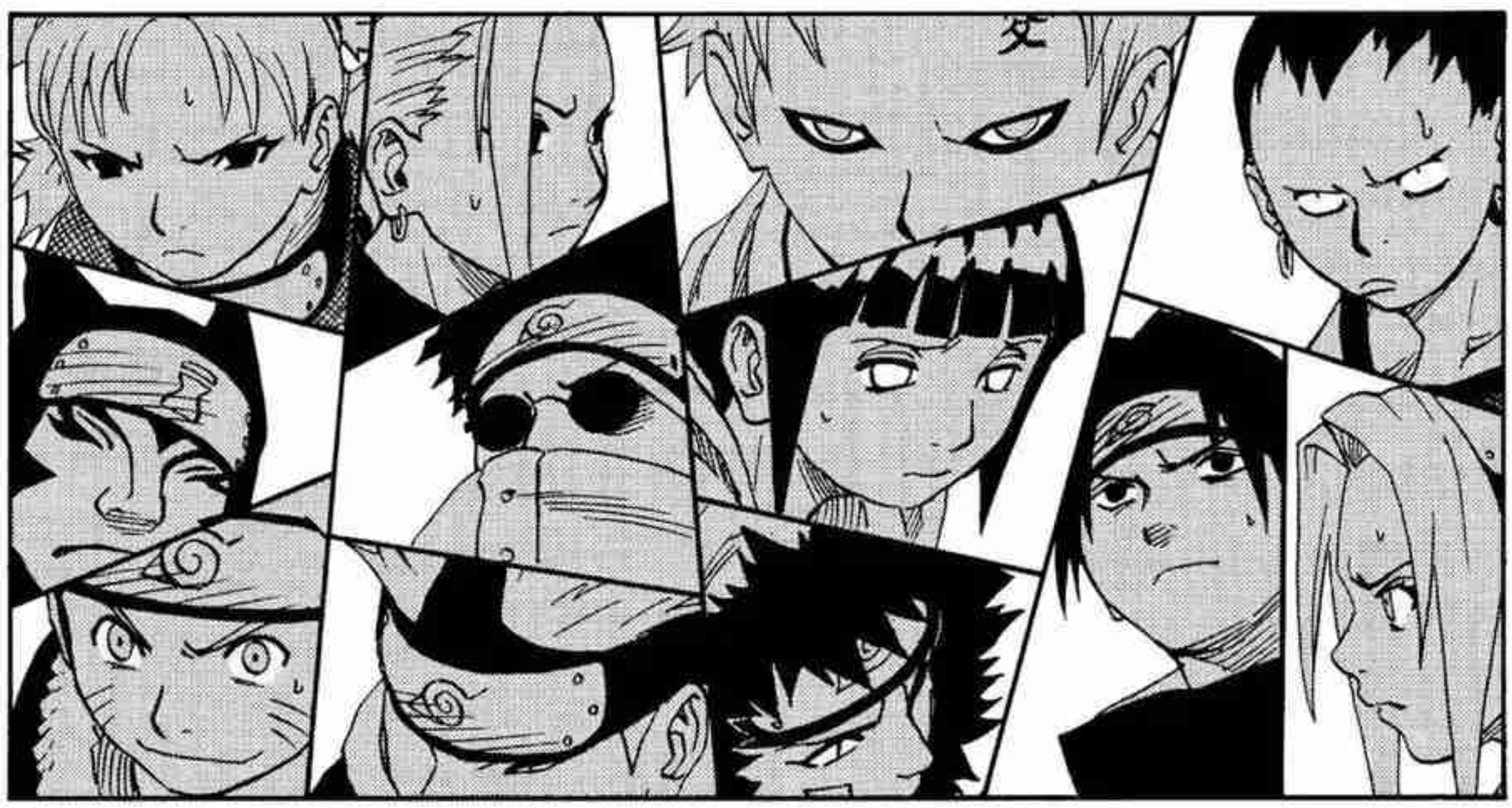
SO, IN ADDITION TO THOSE WHO DIE IN ATTEMPTS TO DEFEND OR CAPTURE A SCROLL...

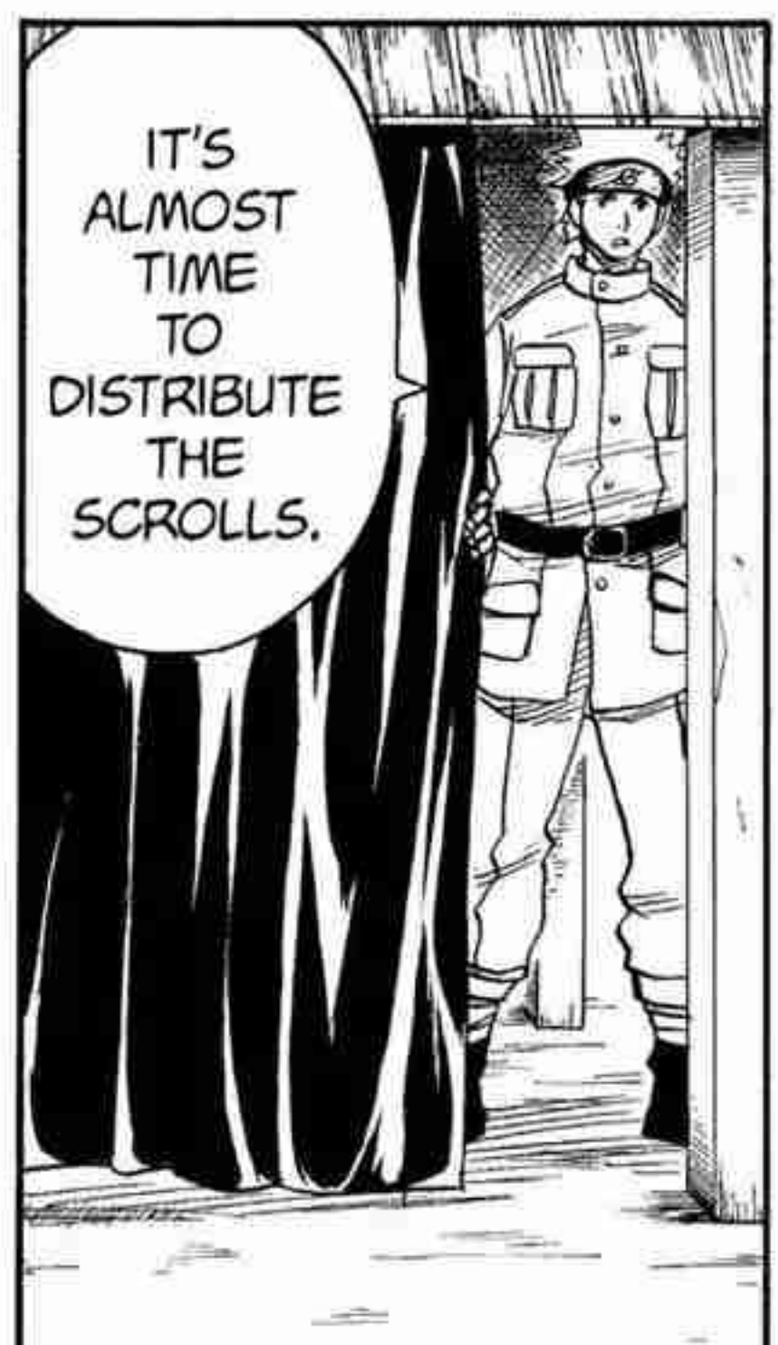


...YOU'RE FORBIDDEN TO LOOK AT THE CONTENTS OF THE SCROLLS UNTIL YOU'RE INSIDE THE TOWER!
ALSO...
THAT'S FOR THOSE WHO LOOK TO KNOW! ♡
WHAT HAPPENS IF WE SNEAK A PEEK?
WE'LL TRADE ONE SCROLL FOR EVERY THREE FORMS.
THAT'S ALL THE EXPLANATION YOU GET.
WHEN YOU'VE GOT YOURS, CHOOSE THE GATE YOU WANT TO START FROM. EVERYONE WILL BEGIN AT THE SAME TIME.
?
IF ANY OF YOU MAKE IT TO THE *CHÛNIN* LEVEL, THERE WILL BE TIMES WHEN YOU'LL BE ENTRUSTED WITH TOP-SECRET DOCUMENTS...
...SO CONSIDER THIS A TEST OF YOUR TRUSTWORTHI-NESS.

STAY ALIVE!

ONE FINAL PIECE OF ADVICE...

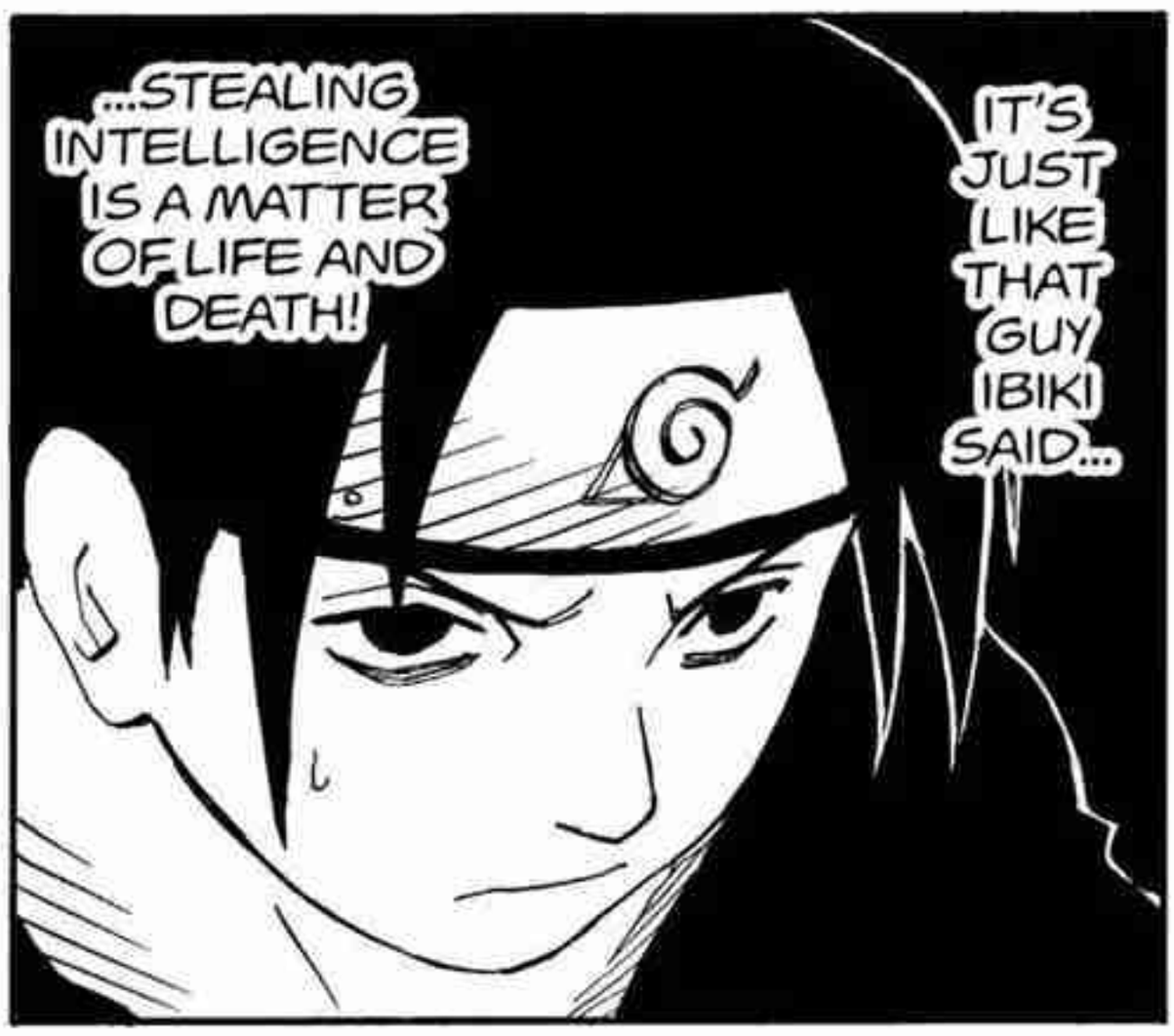


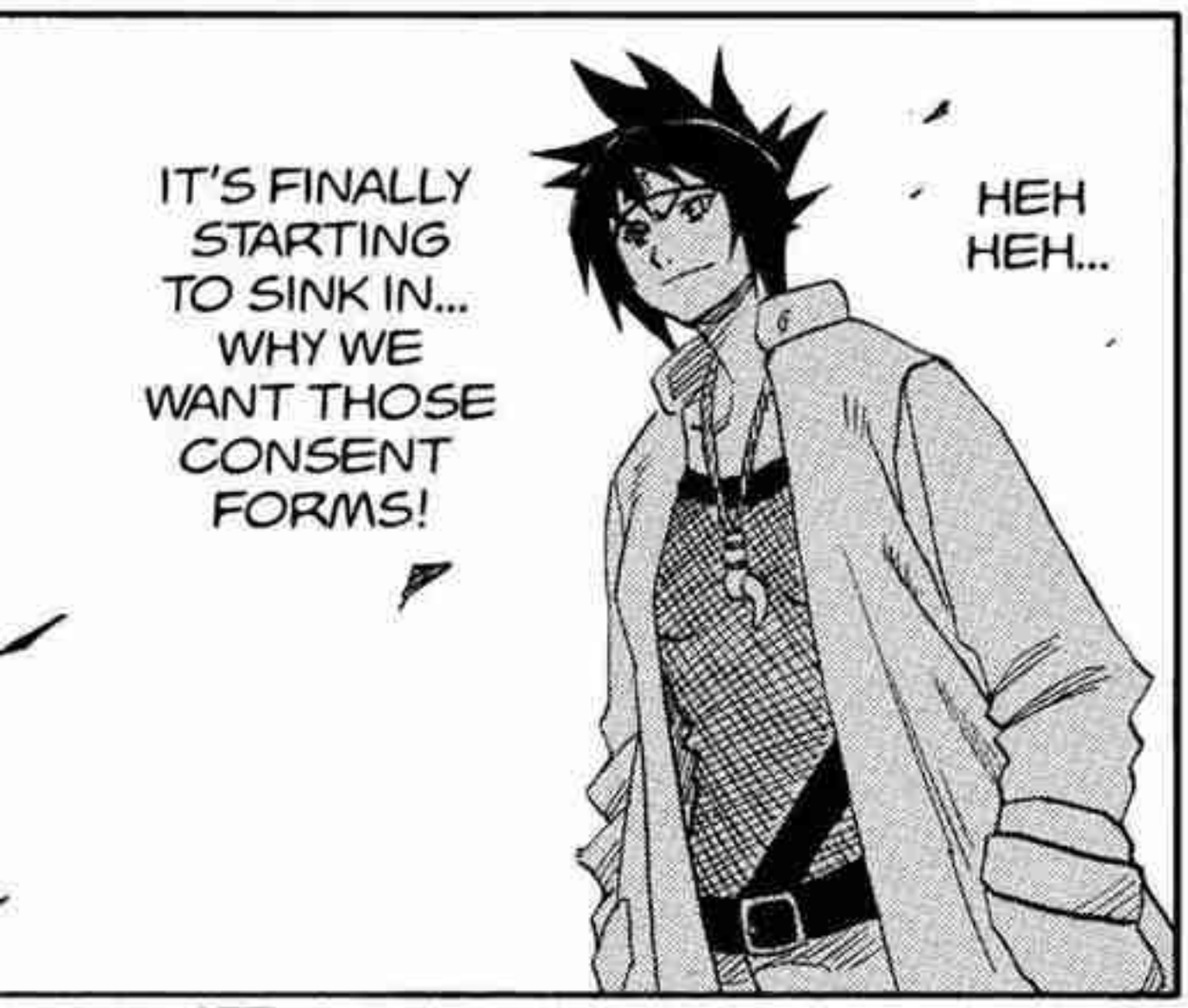


...THEY'RE CONCEALING WHICH TYPE OF SCROLL EACH TEAM GETS... AND WHICH MEMBER IS CARRYING IT!
SMART! TO KEEP US IN THE DARK...

SKF

EVERYONE IS AN ENEMY!!


...STEALING INTELLIGENCE IS A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!
IT'S JUST LIKE THAT GUY IBIKI SAID...


IT'S FINALLY STARTING TO SINK IN... WHY WE WANT THOSE CONSENT FORMS!
HEH HEH...

IF WE'RE ALL WILLING TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH, THIS COULD BECOME A MASSACRE.
AND WE'RE PROBABLY ALL EQUALLY DETERMINED.
CONSENT FORM

YOU HAVE 120 HOURS IN WHICH TO COMPLETE THIS EXAM--

--EXACTLY FIVE DAYS!

YOU BET! AND THERE'S A TIME LIMIT!

--THE THIRTEEN TEAMS WHOSE SCROLLS ARE STOLEN-- WILL FAIL.

IN OTHER WORDS, AT LEAST HALF OF US--

THE FORESTS ARE FULL OF NATURE'S BOUNTY.

OF COURSE, THEY'RE ALSO FULL OF MAN-EATING ANIMALS, DEADLY INSECTS, AND POISONOUS PLANTS.

THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM.

WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO FOR FOOD?!

FIVE DAYS?!

YOU'LL BE SURROUNDED BY ENEMIES AT ALL TIMES, SO YOU'LL HAVE TO SLEEP WITH ONE EYE OPEN.

...WITH LESS RECOVERY TIME FOR ANY MISTAKES, ACCIDENTS, OR INJURIES.

AS THE TIME SHORTENS, THE TRIALS WILL COME HARDER AND FASTER...

THERE'S NO WAY AS MANY AS THIRTEEN TEAMS WILL PASS THIS.

SIGH

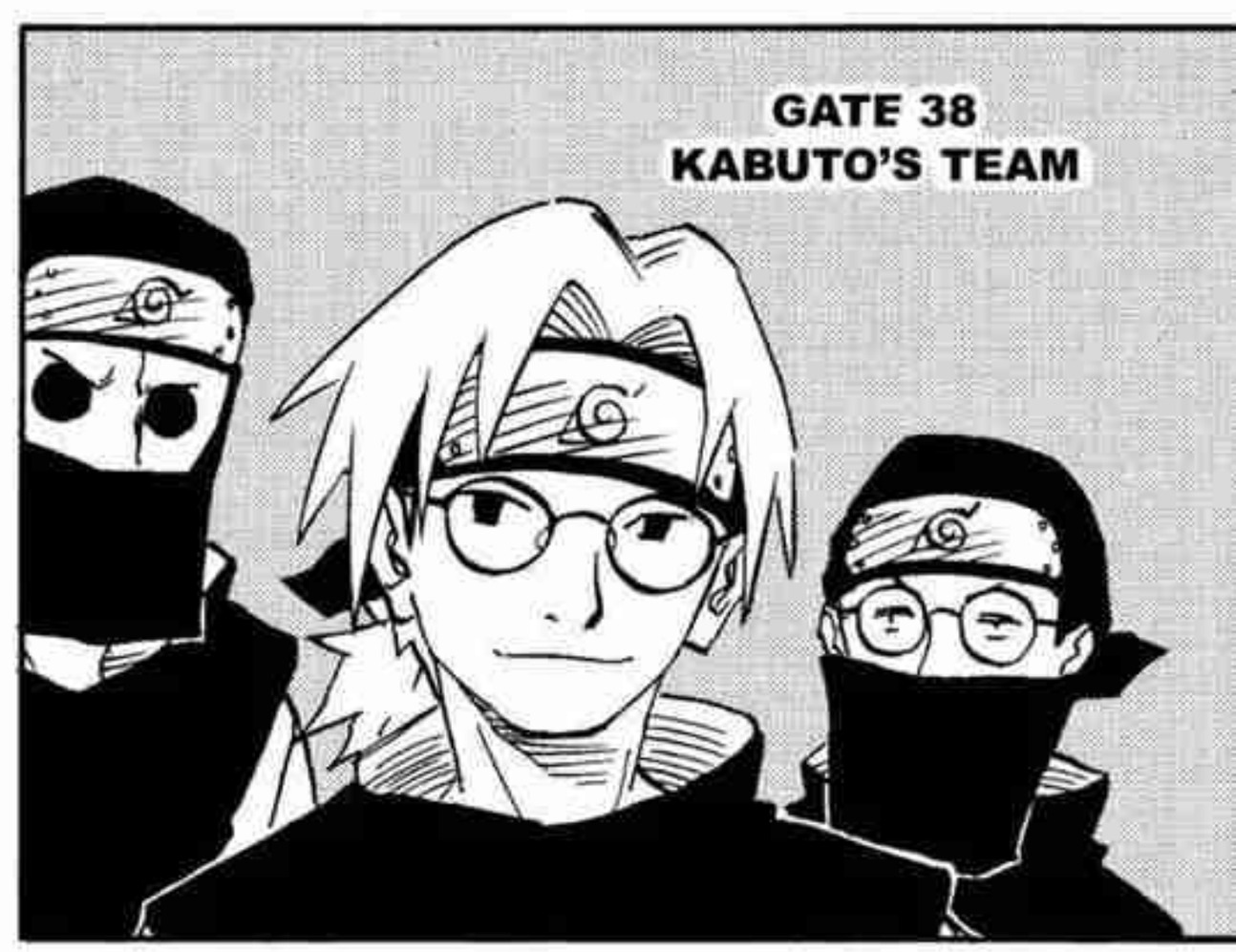
...LOOKS LIKE NARUTO'S OUR TARGET.
A FIGHT TO THE DEATH? WHAT A NUISANCE... BUT IF IT'S THE ONLY WAY...
GRUMBLE
GATE 27
• SHIKAMARU
• CHOJI • INO

...
DON'T GO SOFT ON US, HINATA!
WOOHOO! IF IT'S SURVIVAL SKILLS THEY WANT, WE'VE GOT IT MADE!
GATE 16
• KIBA
• HINATA • SHINO

...TO CARRY OUT OUR ORDERS IN THE OPEN.
HEH HEH... THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME...
GATE 20
OTONIN
(SOUND) TEAM

ANYONE COMES NEAR US, I'LL KILL 'EM MYSELF!
YEAH! YEAH! WE CAN'T LOSE, I TELL YA!!
OH, PLEASE!
STAB
GATE 12
NARUTO'S TEAM

...BUT FIVE DAYS IN THE FOREST WITH THAT CREEPY GAARA... ARRRGH!
I'VE GOT TO LOOK OUT FOR ENEMY TEAMS...
GATE 6
• GAARA
• KANKURO
• TEMARI


GATE 38
KABUTO'S TEAM

...WHICH SHOULD MAKE OUR JOB A LOT EASIER.

IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT CARTE BLANCHE TO PICK THEM OFF FROM HERE ON IN...

TARGET THE ROOKIES FIRST.

悪悪悪

罪罪罪

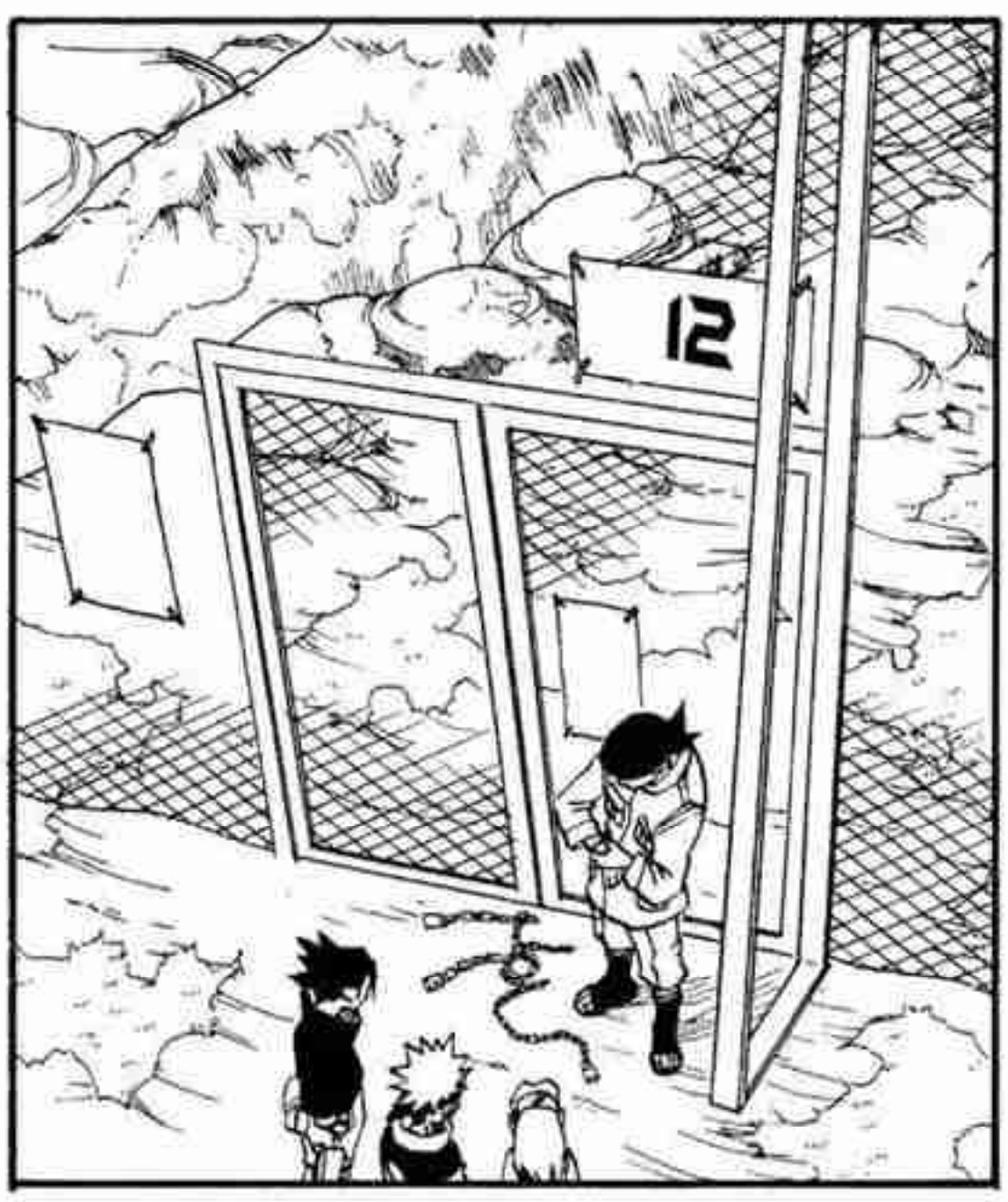
**GATE 15**
**THE MYSTERIOUS KUSANIN GRASS NINJA TRIO.**

*THE TAGS ON THE HATS READ (RIGHT TO LEFT) "CRIME," "EVIL," AND "PUNISHMENT."

MASTER GUY, I WILL DO MY BEST!
GATE 41
• NEJI
• LEE • TENTEN

SLAP

WHEN THE SIGNAL SOUNDS IN HALF AN HOUR, THE EXAM WILL BEGIN!!
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE, FOLLOW YOUR PROCTORS TO YOUR RESPECTIVE GATES!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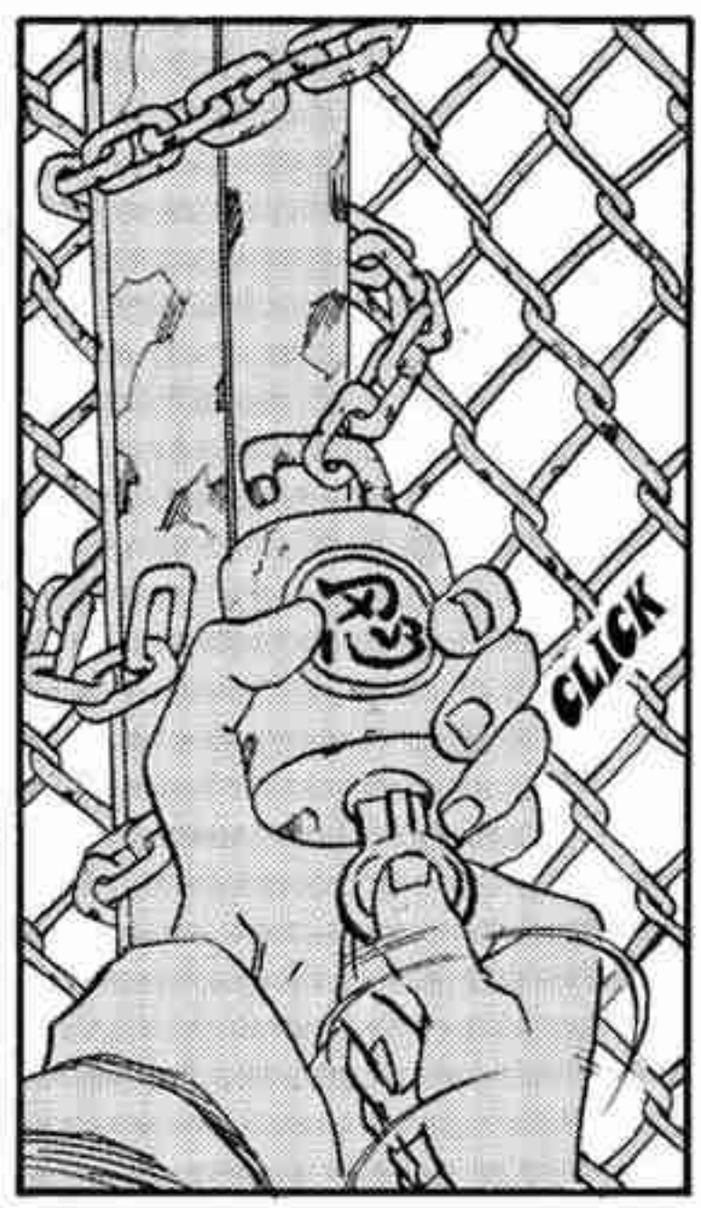
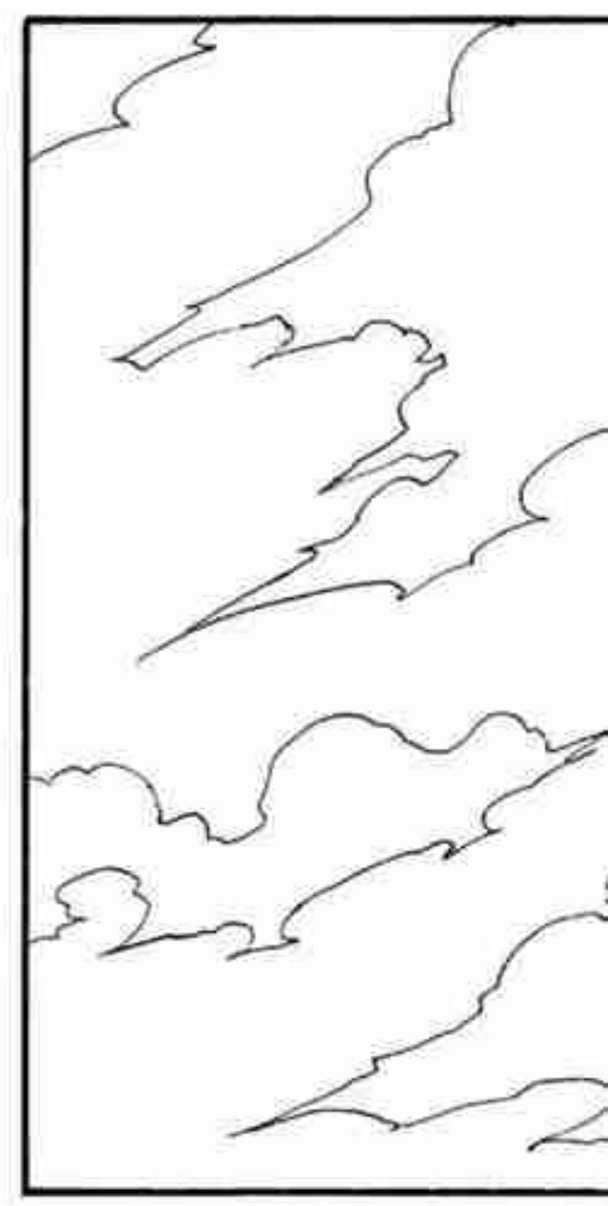
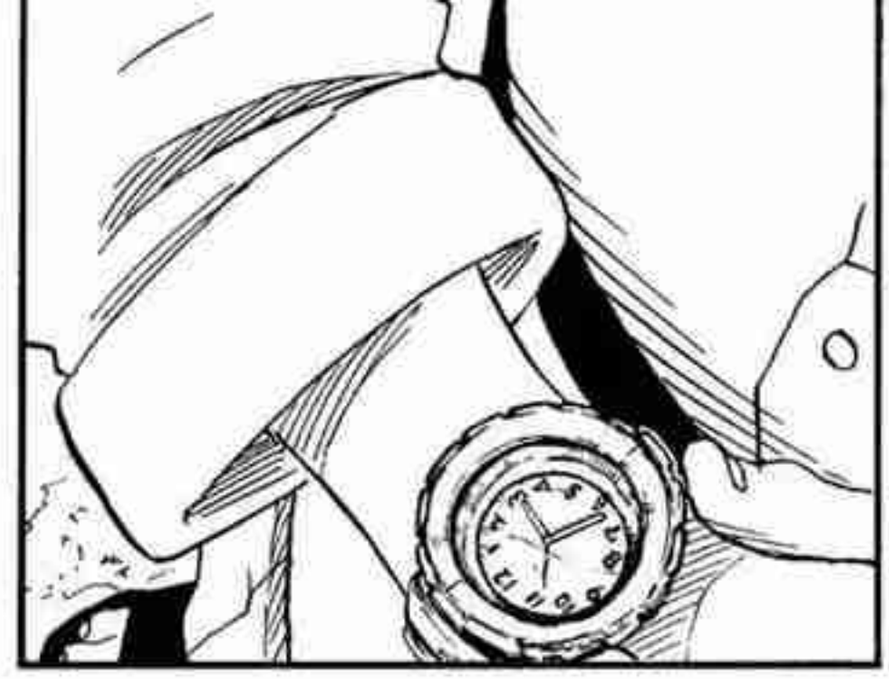
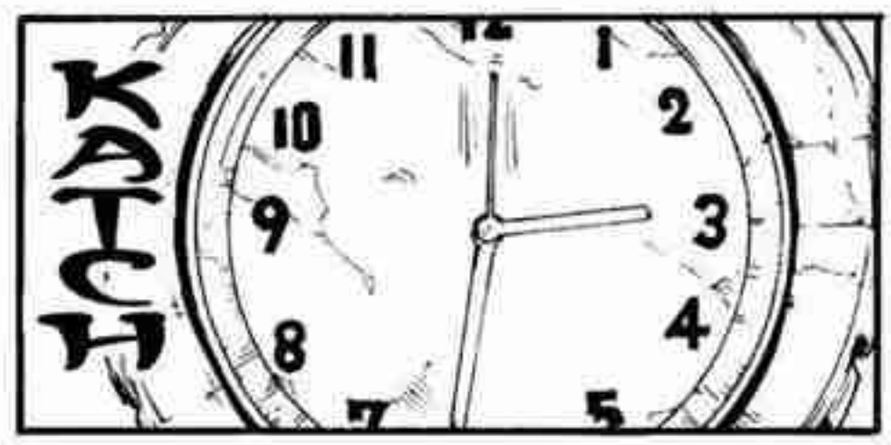

CLICK

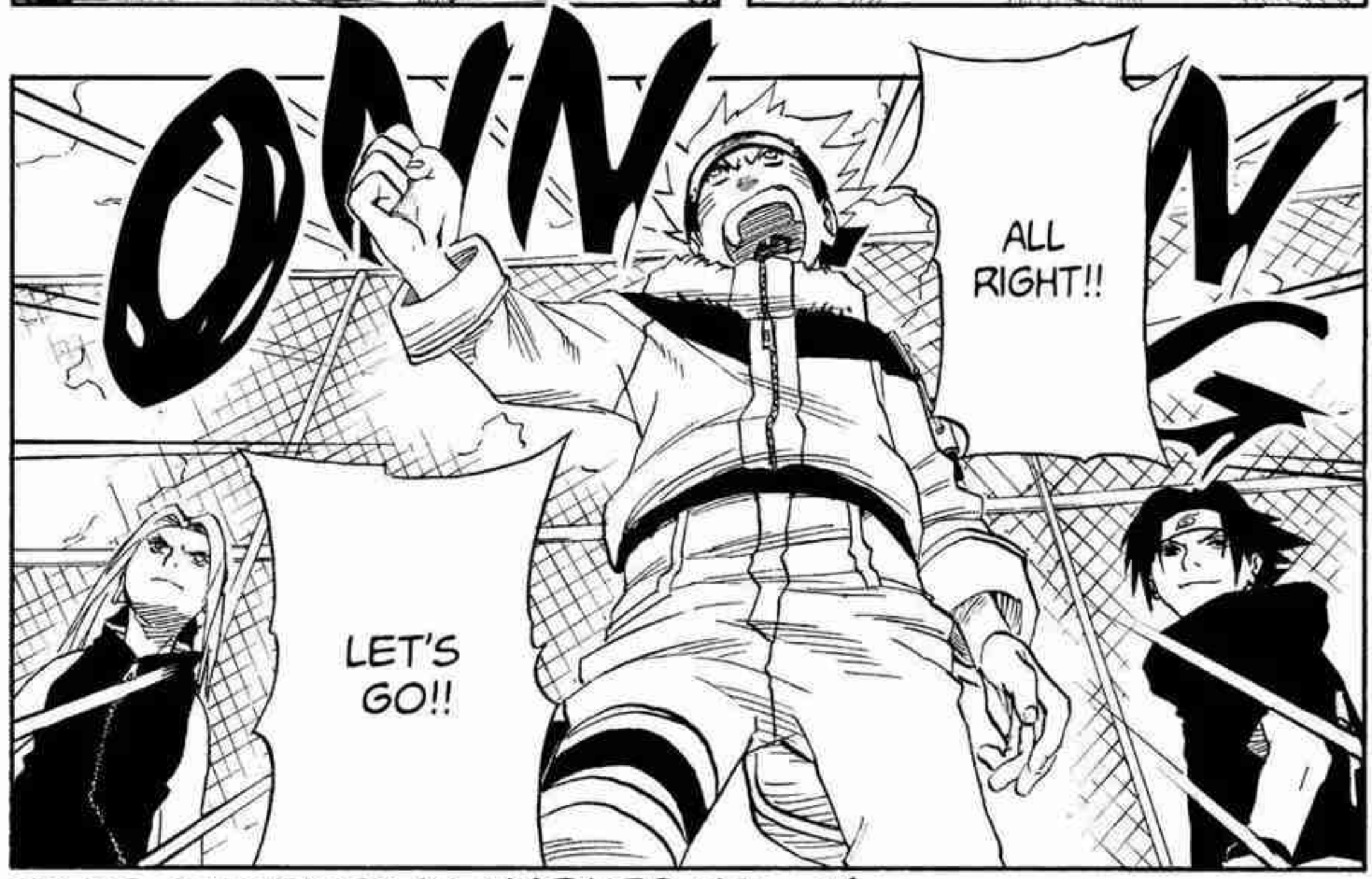


NOW!!

PART TWO OF THE JOURNEYMAN NINJA SELECTION EXAM BEGINS...








TO BE CONTINUED IN *NARUTO* VOL. 6!